THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

An [illegible] Weekly
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JULY 31, 1915 5cts. THE COPY

In This Number: CHARLES E. VAN LOAN—JOSEPH HERGESHEIMER—MARY ROBERTS RINEHART
RICHARD WASHBURN CHILD—THOMAS JAMES DONLON—RING W. LARDNER—ROGER W. BABSON

From the prairies
of Dakota:
from the wheat lands
of Minnesota;
from the banks
of the Red River
of the North,
comes the wheat
that made
this flour.

Pure and strong
with the strength of
the sturdy grain which
bore it,
carried by rail and steam
to the Atlantic and the Pacific,
to lands beyond
the far horizon,
where the deft fingers
of a woman
will knead it,
and men and children
will take strength
from its vital
substance.

AT ALL GROCERS

Are your loved ones safe from FIRE

Fire is the great enemy that comes when you least expect it—stealthily, often in the night, and sometimes robs a home of son, daughter or wife.

Two thousand lives were sacrificed last year through fire.

Somewhere a fire breaks out every two minutes. Your home may be the next.

What would you do? If you are not home what would your *family* do?

There is a protector in just such an emergency.

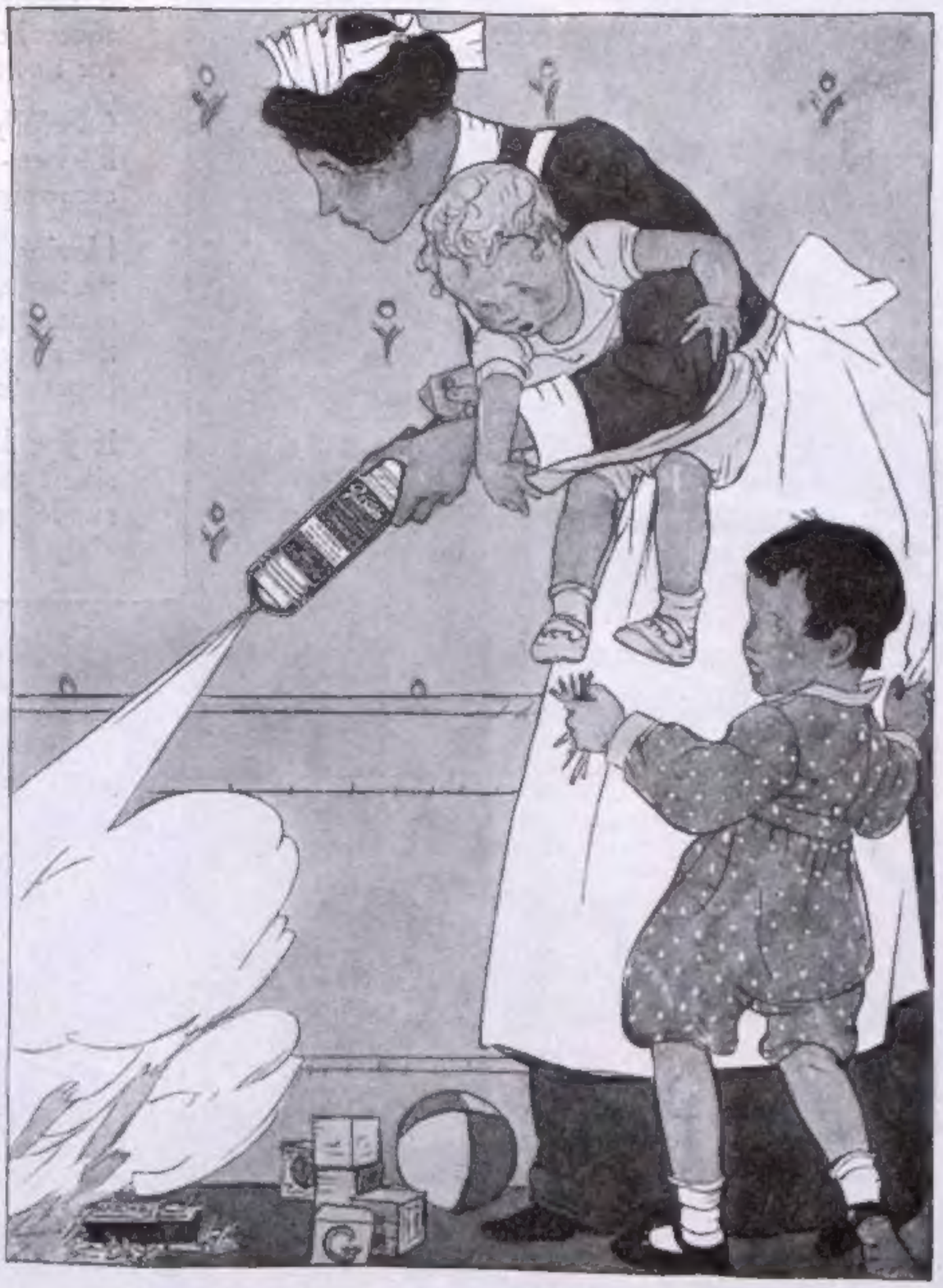
It is Pyrene, a fire extinguisher, only fourteen inches long, and weighing but six pounds. A small boy can operate it.

Pyrene puts fires out. It puts them out *quick*—before they grow big—*every kind* of fire—some that water won't even slacken. It never deteriorates—requires no recharging—does not freeze. And it never does any damage.

Many persons call Pyrene "The little fire engine for the home."

That's just exactly what Pyrene is.

Think of that son, daughter or wife and get Pyrene before another day slips by.



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Write for Booklet "The Vital Five Minutes"

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Branches in 26 cities.
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There is a tremendous demand for Pyrene. It is sold by Hardware, Paint, Drug, Department and General Merchandise Stores; by Automobile Supply Dealers and Garages; by Electrical Supply Dealers and Ship Chandlers. If you are not now handling Pyrene, write at once.

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Pyrene protects factories, stores, theatres, hotels, churches, schools, railroad cars, street cars, subway cars, river and ocean going ships. *Write for Factory Booklet.*

Brass and Nickel-plated Pyrene Fire Extinguishers are included in the lists of Approved Fire Appliances issued by the National Board of Fire Underwriters, and are Inspected, Tested and Approved by, and bear the label of, the Underwriters' Laboratories, Inc.

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THE number of Crisco enthusiasts grows with every day—and, thanks to the quality of the product, will keep growing as long as Crisco is made and women continue to cook.

Four years ago Crisco was offered as a new cooking material, to be used in place of butter and lard.

It created immediate interest on the part of those housewives who are ever on the alert for newer and better things.

Carefully, thoroughly—by practical use in the kitchen—they tried it out, to see whether it came up to the claims of its makers.

Having satisfied themselves, by actual experience, of the purity, richness, digestibility, economy and convenience of Crisco, they and their friends—and the friends of their friends—began to buy it in ever-increasing quantity.

If you have not given Crisco a trial, let the silent testimony of this army of users persuade you to do so.

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For Frying For Shortening
For Cake Making

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GHOST CITIES OF THE WEST

Virginia City—By Charles E. Van Loan

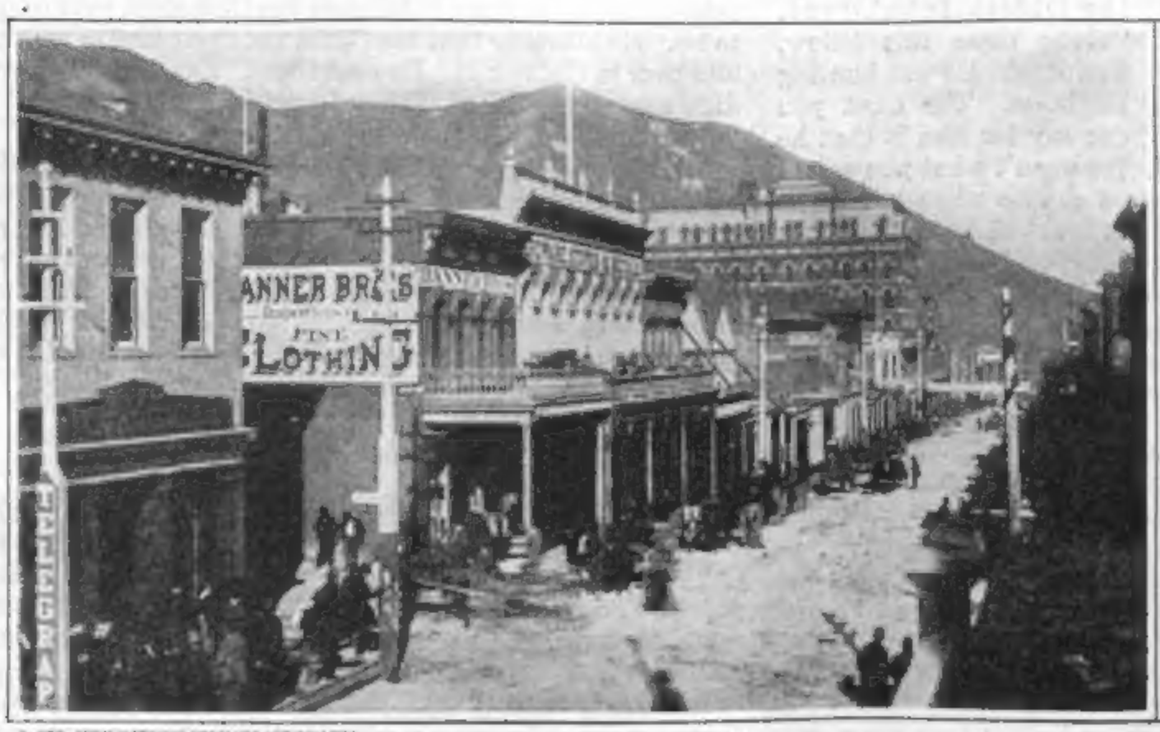


PHOTO. FROM WATKIN'S YOSEMITE ART GALLERY

C Street, Virginia City, in the Early Eighties

C Street, Virginia City, To-Day

NEVADA is the land of ghost cities. From the Utah line to the California boundary, the Sagebrush State is dotted with the sun-dried mummies and skeletons of towns that used to be. These were the mining camps of the sixties and seventies; many men still living recall them in their prime, but to the casual visitor they seem much older than their histories would indicate. It is hard to believe that a state so young can have towns so old and decrepit and weather-beaten. There is something about the desert wind and sun that has aged them prematurely, giving them a look of antiquity.

From the ragged, treeless hills, hoisting works of mines forgotten look down upon the sand and sagebrush of the plain; high up in almost inaccessible cañons one comes upon fallen walls and tons of rusting machinery, deserted cabins and dugouts, and the stone ruins of nameless stage stations, long since gone to decay. These are the ghost cities of the West, living only in the memories of a few old men who speak boastingly of the days when "she was the second biggest town in the state and a rip-snorter if ever there was one."

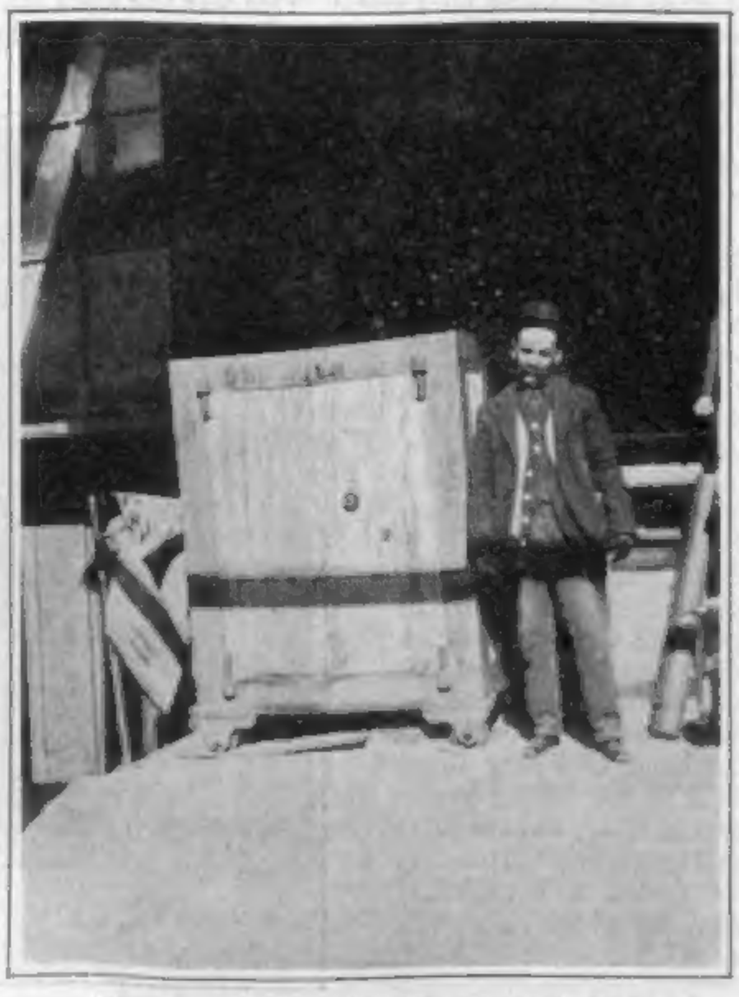
It seems to be a point of honor with these aged residents never to claim less than five figures for the boom-time population of a pet camp.

"The books say six thousand, but the books are wrong. We used to have ten thousand people here—yes, ten thousand easy, in the town and right round it—maybe more. She was the second biggest, sure."

Then they will tell of the millions in silver and gold that came out of the forgotten mines; of the days when they had a man for breakfast every morning and the stages traveled with two shotgun messengers—one on the box and one inside—to protect the bullion shipments from the road-agents; of the lively sixties and the booming seventies; but in the end they are sure to mention the city that held them in second place, the first city of those silver days, the one great city of the period—Virginia, as they call it.

"Virginia's a little bit quiet now," say the old-timers; "but she'll come up again. She always did, and when they get the water out of those lower levels ——"

Yes, Virginia City is a little bit quiet now. She roosts on a scarred mountain side, looking down on Six Mile Cañon and the immense grayish mounds that tell the story of the disemboweling of the Comstock Lode—a little bit quiet now. C Street, once the busiest street in the new world, is all but deserted. Here and there houses lean tipsily into it or away from it, as if making up their minds which way to fall. They have a right to stagger a trifle, for beneath the city are six hundred miles of underground workings, six hundred miles of drifts and tunnels and winzes. Is it any wonder that the earth's crust is slowly settling?



The Bonanza Safe, for Sale at Five Dollars

A little bit quiet now, but Virginia City can afford to rest on her record, scornful of the yapping of modern mining camps. She had her day, and it was the longest, brightest, richest day of them all. She claims for the Comstock Lode a production of something beyond half a billion in silver and gold. She remembers the days when bullion bars were as common a sight as cordwood—bars so heavy that no guards were necessary, as thieves could not carry them away. She remembers the Big Bonanza and the score of lesser bonanzas, any one of which would make a mining town famous; and her inhabitants speak of many of the great money kings of thirty years ago with affectionate familiarity.

"And why not?" says the Oldest Inhabitant. "Didn't they get their start right here on the Comstock?"

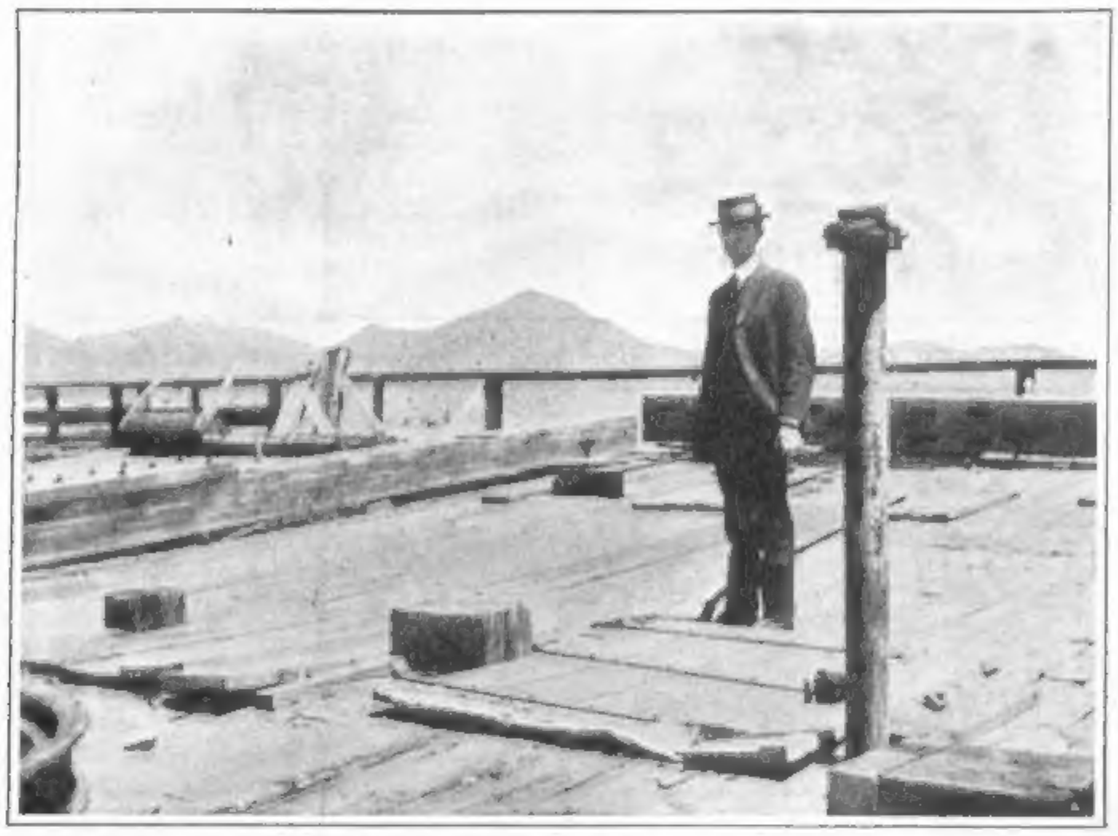
Virginia City may be quiet now, but she makes no excuses for her quietness; she offers no apologies. If she has regrets she voices only one, and that for the loss of the old International Hotel, lately destroyed by fire. It was built of stone and steel; it was six stories high; it contained the first elevators Nevada ever saw and it cost a fortune. Virginia City regrets the loss of that landmark. Things may boom again on the Comstock and she will miss the International. So will the transients.

Virginia City has some of the conservatism of age—she is only fifty-five, but seems older—yet is progressive along certain lines. For instance, she likes moving pictures.

There was a time when Piper's Opera House staged the best that America had to offer in the way of traveling theatrical organizations. Every company that visited the Pacific Coast broke the journey at Virginia City and found it a gold mine. The auditorium and the stilted, old-fashioned stage-boxes were gay with Paris gowns and ablaze with diamonds, and the boots of the miners thumped in the gallery. Booth and Barrett were the great favorites in those days and poor John McCullough is still remembered. Grand opera received lavish support, but now Piper's Opera House offers a screen drama once or twice a week and plays to an interested and critical audience.

The old men are still to be found in the vicinity of the Sawdust Corner—Virginia's Forty-second and Broadway. The Sawdust Corner was once the clearing house of all the news and gossip of the day. It was here that the miners used to hold their public meetings; here that the questions of the seventies and eighties were discussed; here that many of the camp's early tragedies were enacted. Bullet marks are still to be found on the walls and in the awning posts. The Oldest Inhabitant—he proudly exhibits his name in the Virginia Directory for 1861—was kind enough to point out these scars of conflict.

"It was this way: One of the men stood just here, behind the post, and the other one—I don't recall his name; there was so much of that sort of thing going



The Closed Shaft of the Old Con. Virginia Mine, in Which the Big Bonanza Was Discovered

on—was in the middle of the street. Call 'em Jones and Smith. Well, Jones kept walking closer and closer, shooting as he came, but mostly he was hitting the post, as you can see. When he got close enough, Smith let him have it. He waited to make sure of getting him."

The Oldest Inhabitant also pointed out an interesting relic, stranded on the sidewalk in front of a second-hand store—a big, square safe of an obsolete pattern.

"This is the Bonanza safe," said he. "We call it that because it belonged to the Bonanza firm—Flood, Fair, Mackay & O'Brien. Think of all the millions that have been in that old box—and you can buy it now for a five-dollar note, if you'll haul it away. It ought to be worth that—as a souvenir of old times."

Then there is the livery stable on B Street—a relic of the days when a man was known by the team he drove. Virginia was famous for her horseflesh; thoroughbreds from the Washoe Valley went East and defeated Kentucky's best. This stable has stall room for two hundred horses and the ground floor is packed with ancient equipages of all kinds, from spidery traps and side-bar buggies to the gaudy carriages of the bonanza kings. When the millionaires went away they left them behind. Tarnished silver fittings, rotting silk and fading plush—these are eloquent of the vanished period of Virginia's greatness.

"I remember this one well," said the Oldest Inhabitant. "It was Jim Fair's carriage. It cost a barrel of money when it was new, but what was money in those days? . . . Oh, yes, it goes out of the barn once in a while—when we have a funeral."

So the story of Virginia City is not what she is now so much as what she has been—a story that comes only in kaleidoscopic flashes through a dull present to a lively past. It begins where everything began, with the discovery of the Comstock Lode.

Mules That Cost Three Millions

THE finding of America's richest ore body, second only in production to the gold reefs of the Rand, was an accident due to an insufficient water supply. Even the naming of it was an accident, traceable to the overwhelming assurance and conversational powers of one Henry Thomas Paige Comstock, a skirmisher on the flying wedge of exploration. The lode which will always bear his name might with more fairness be called the O'Riley, the McLaughlin or the Grosch. By some it is claimed that Allen and Hosea Grosch discovered the outcroppings of the lode; the credit is generally accorded to Peter O'Riley and Patrick McLaughlin.

Since 1850, when Nevada was a portion of Utah Territory, known only as the Washoe Country, placer gold had been mined in the streams of what is now Lyon County, Nevada, less than a day's march from the hidden bonanzas of the Comstock. In time miners climbed the twisting trail that afterward became the main street of Gold Hill, crossed the Divide, took one look at the forbidding slope of Mount Davidson—then Sunrise Peak—and chose the lower ground of Six Mile Cañon, a broad gulch extending to the eastward. There they found gold in small quantities, but did not linger long as a general thing. California was the land of promise in those days.

In the spring of 1859 came Peter O'Riley and Patrick McLaughlin, intending to locate somewhere in Six Mile Cañon. There was nothing left for them on the lower ground, and rather than waste the trip they decided to try the mountain. They began work in the bed of a tiny stream fed by a spring in the rocks above. The surface indications were not promising, and in addition to this the stream was not large enough to serve their purpose, so they dug a pit in order to collect sufficient water to operate their rocker—the crudest known device for the separation of free gold from gravel and dirt.

Noticing a change in the appearance of the soil from the bottom of the pit, they dumped a bucket of it into the rocker and washed it. The gold was there in abundance—a shining film on the riffles of the rocker—and with it a mass of heavy black stuff which O'Riley and McLaughlin believed to be base metal of some sort and worthless. They threw it away.

"About that time," says the Oldest Inhabitant, "along came this fellow, Comstock. He was hunting his horse. The most you can say for him is that he had plenty of nerve and wind. He wasn't what you would call a smart man, but he knew a chance when he saw it. And there was the gold, right in front of him. Well, sir, Comstock started in to run a blazer on those Irishmen.

"'This stream of water is mine,' says he. 'I've filed on it and you'll have to go somewhere else.'

"It was the rawest bluff in the world, but it worked. Comstock outtalked 'em. They offered him a share of the claim not to make trouble and, of course, that was all he was after. And when that part of it was settled what does Comstock do but make himself a kind of general manager. Work? Not him! He sat down and told the Irishmen what to do.

"They decided to call the claim the Ophir, but when the other miners came up from below to see what they'd found, there was Comstock to do the talking, and it was 'My mine this,' and 'My mine that,' until everybody got to calling the Ophir Comstock's mine. When they went deeper it was Comstock's vein, and after that the Comstock Lode. He just talked himself into it, from start to finish—and that's how the Comstock got its name."

The heavy black stuff continued to annoy O'Riley and McLaughlin. They found it in increasing quantities—so much of it that it clogged the riffles and apron of the rocker, making it hard for them to collect the particles of gold. They were all placer miners; none of them had ever seen any silver ore, and as long as they regarded the black stuff as worthless, the greatest discovery of the decade hung fire.

At last some of the other miners persuaded O'Riley and McLaughlin to send samples of the black stuff to an assayer in Nevada City, California. This man made an examination, rubbed his eyes, verified his calculations and sent back word that the stuff that O'Riley and McLaughlin had been throwing away as worthless was black sulphuret of silver and almost pure metal. This was the news that set the hobnails of the California contingent to pounding the overland trail, and with the forty-niners came the Mexicans, the only experienced silver miners of the period.

O'Riley, McLaughlin and Comstock did not realize the extent of their good fortune. The proof of this may be found in a dog's-eared memorandum book still carefully preserved in the courthouse at Virginia City. In this book, the earliest official record of the boom days on the Comstock, is the formal notice of a transfer of one-third of the Ophir property, the consideration being two mules and the labor necessary to construct two arrastres. One traces the hand of Henry Comstock in this trifling avoidance of labor, but the price paid by the original locators for mules will probably stand for all time a world's record.

"You don't need to figure the arrastres at all," says the Oldest Inhabitant. "They were just thrown in with the mules, like. And those mules now: maybe they weren't even good ones, but do you know what they cost? The Ophir was the first of the bonanzas, and before they got through with her they took out twenty millions. Roughly speaking, that's three millions a mule. Oh, well, none of the old boys got much of anything out of the camp. It was the men who came along afterward and put in the machinery."

This remarkable transaction foreshadows the fate of the original locators on the lode. Their luck began and ended with the tapping of the vein.

"There was McLaughlin now," says the Oldest Inhabitant. "He sold out for less than four thousand and had quite a time while the money lasted. The last I heard of him he was cooking for a mine crew. Comstock got ten thousand for his interest and went over to Carson and bought a store, but he trusted everybody and didn't keep any books. They broke him in a couple of years and he went to prospecting again. He shot himself up in Montana somewhere. O'Riley had a little better luck—for a while. He hung on longer than the others, and when he sold out he started a hotel here. He would have made money if he hadn't got to gambling in mining stocks. He walked out of town one day, flat broke, telling everybody that he was going to make a bigger strike than the Comstock ever dared to be. He stuck to that idea until they put him in an asylum over in California. He died there. Yes, the old-timers didn't get the millions. They found 'em, that was all."

In the fall of 1859 the camp took a name.

"And there was something queer about that," says the Oldest Inhabitant. "There used to be an old prospector round here named Fennimore. They called him Finney for short, and sometimes Ole Virginny on account of his always talking about his native state. Finney liked his liquor pretty well and one night he fell and broke his bottle. He poured out the drop or two that was left—poured it on the ground. The boys asked him what he was doing."

The Christening of Virginia City

"'I'M CHRISTENING this camp,' says he. 'It's time she had a real name and from now on she's Virginia Town.'

"When the postal authorities sent out the cancellation stamps 'Town' was changed to read 'City.' Old Finney made an awful row about that, but the Government outheld him and Virginia City she was."

And such a city! Old-timers on the Comstock—and there are still a few who remember the first bonanzas—say there never was a city like it, never can be a city like it again. They are right. A city is not made of stone and brick and mortar, but of flesh and blood and spirit, and Virginia was fortunate in having the pick of the Argonauts, the splendid youth of California, to draw upon. These were the men who rounded the Horn in sailing vessels, or crossed the plains in prairie schooners, fighting their way through the Indian country; the men of whom it has been said: "The cowards never started and the weaklings died on the way."

Virginia drew her early population from the gold camps just across the border in the counties of Calaveras, Tuolumne, Amador, Placer, Eldorado, Plumas and Sierra. Miners from Placerville and Sonora, merchants from San Francisco, gamblers from Marysville and Sacramento, adventurers from everywhere, Mexicans from the pueblo towns to the south, prospectors, day laborers, professional bad men—every road leading into the Washoe Country

The Office of The Enterprise, Mark Twain's Old Paper

was heavy with the dust of their advance; every mountain trail in the Sierras swarmed with them. They had heard that men were taking gold and silver from the very roots of the sagebrush, and they wanted their share.

Then came the first ore shipment from the Ophir mine—forty-five tons of croppings, hauled by mules and oxen to San Francisco for reduction. The freight was twenty-five cents a pound and the smelting charge was four hundred and fifty dollars a ton, but even at such rates the shipment netted $128,250.

The first Comstock ore that experts were privileged to examine yielded thirty-eight hundred dollars to the ton, and after that no story was too wild for belief.

From a score of placer miners in the spring of 1859 the population of the district leaped into the thousands, and in this army were the hard-headed men who were destined to develop the immense resources of the bonanza country.

New names were added to the list of rich mines of the West, great names: Ophir, Savage, Gould & Curry, Hale & Norcross, Chollar & Potosi, while just over the Divide in Gold Hill, half an hour's walk from the center of Virginia City, were the Yellow Jacket, Belcher and Crown Point, every one of them a mint.

Machinery was freighted in over the Sierras, hoisting works and stamp mills were erected, shafts grew deeper day by day; and soon there was a city underneath a city, with miles of drifts and tunnels penetrating the solid rock. One of the mines was owned by a Mexican named Maldonado, who employed none but Mexican miners. Maldonado knew nothing about the possibilities of steam, and, therefore, his men were obliged to carry the ore to the surface, climbing notched poles, with rawhide sacks on their backs.

Those were the days when Virginia never slept. In the hotels and lodging houses beds worked two and even three shifts in twenty-four hours. A placard giving the "Rules of Conduct for Visitors" at one of these early hostelries is interesting:

"Furnished rooms with Beds.

"Persons who spend evenings in their rooms must furnish their own light.

"The use of miners' candlesticks is strictly prohibited."

A Street Paved With Ore

IS IT any wonder that a portion of the population was always awake, always on the streets? For those who did not relish the razor-edged winds of the Washoe Country there were saloons, billiard parlors, gambling houses, dance halls and theaters. When a man invested his money in a place of entertainment in Virginia City he threw the key away, for he never expected to have any use for it.

In the daytime it was almost an impossible job to drive a horse through the jam of ore wagons, freighters, stages and pack trains that blocked the narrow street.

Each ore wagon had one or two trailers and from ten to twenty horses and mules; the California freighters traveled in mile-long sections; a respectable pack train consisted of eighty mules; all the oxen in the world seemed to be grunting up and down Gold Cañon, and the end of every journey and the starting point of the next was one narrow, muddy street, less than a mile in length.

There were no traffic regulations in Virginia City in the sixties: it was every mule-skinner for himself and the devil take the ox teams. The expert who could pilot his twenty mules from the Divide to the Sawdust Corner without losing a wheel or a bare-knuckle fight was a man worth knowing. It was no unusual thing for a teamster to wait two hours in order to negotiate a crossing. Add to this congestion piles of brick and lumber, freight of every possible description, from groceries to grand pianos, a mass meeting of miners crowding the famous Sawdust Corner, heated arguments about the Civil War, a fight or two to add spice to the scene, and you have a fair picture of Virginia in the good old days. In time the citizens grew tired of the mud and paved their main street with ore.

"And good ore too!" says the Oldest Inhabitant with pardonable pride. "You could tear that street up to-day and she'd go pretty strong to the ton. The stuff is there."

A remarkable institution of the early days was the volunteer fire department. To be a policeman was to court sudden death; to be a member of a popular engine company was a great distinction; the captain of an engine company envied no man—not even the president of the miners' union.

Virginia Engine Company, Number One, was first in the field—sixty-five picked men, bearded young giants in red shirts and shining helmets. Almost immediately these volunteer fire fighters had competition. Nevada Hook and Ladder Company was next, and when these organizations turned out on the Fourth of July, swaggering behind a brass band, it may be believed that there were heartburnings along the sidewalks, where the ordinary citizens were gathered.

A Building in Virginia City, Showing the Effect of the Settling of the Earth's Crust

The Famous Sawdust Corner

The spirit of the time was all for display and color and noise—with a chance to be a hero thrown in—and soon came Young America Engine Company. It was organized on the seventeenth day of March, but this may have been coincidence. Young America went Number One considerably better, with eighty men and a five-stream engine that cost six thousand dollars. There quickly followed other engine companies—Eagle, Washoe, Knickerbocker and Monumental—and the rivalry between the organizations was intense, not to say acute. When an alarm sounded there was a general scramble to the various fire houses, a rush through the streets, and the company which "got first water on" made life miserable for the late comers and talked about them for days.

"You wouldn't believe the chances those fellows took," says the Oldest Inhabitant. "Now there was Liberty Engine Company over in Gold Hill. There was a fire near the Belcher mine, and the Liberty boys had only one chance to get there first and that was a tough one—a railroad trestle over the Crown Point Ravine. They did it, dragging their engine behind 'em. One little slip and the whole gang would have gone eighty feet to the bottom of the gulch; but they got over—and had first water on the fire too. You couldn't get a paid fire department to take a chance like that."

Particularly acrimonious was the feeling between the two veteran organizations—Number One and Nevada Hook and Ladder. History relates that on August 19, 1863, Virginia City had its first destructive fire, with plenty of work for all hands. Number One and the Hook and Ladder met in a narrow side street and passed the compliments of the day. Someone, short on repartee, retorted with a brick and dropped a Hook and Ladder man in his tracks.

Instantly the fire was forgotten in a rush for the brick piles. There were smashed helmets and cracked skulls, the red shirts grew redder and the fire burned the heart out of the town, while the fire fighters fought each other. It was no sham battle either. One man was killed and dozens were injured, many of them seriously. Probably the only people who did not enjoy the evening were the merchants who lost their places of business by the fire.

Piper's Opera House

Bad Men on the Comstock

SPEAKING of the volunteer fire department, some of the old timers in Virginia City still recall the funeral of Julia Prulette. Julia was young, pretty and wayward, not at all the sort of person to be on speaking terms with Virginia's wives and daughters. She had, however, the great virtue of kindness, and when the members of the Hook and Ladder Company fell ill she nursed them. She also decorated their truck and apparatus before the parades, and in recognition of these things Nevada Hook and Ladder voted her an honorary member of the organization—probably she was the only woman so distinguished. When she died they gave her a public funeral, with every outward mark of mourning and respect. The Hook and Ladder truck, draped in black, trundled out C Street to the graveyard beyond the Scorpion mine, a brass band playing a dirge and hundreds marching in the line.

"They came back playing The Girl I Left Behind Me," says the Oldest Inhabitant, "and the Hook and Ladder boys started out to find the man that killed Julia Prulette. John Millesin was his name, and when they got him they hung him."

Human life was the cheapest thing on the Comstock in those days. The man-for-breakfast period lasted for several years, and the Oldest Inhabitant sneers at the assertion that Pioche, or any other Nevada camp, was a worse one for killings.

"We had one every day or so," says the Oldest Inhabitant. "Sometimes they came in pairs."

Not all the cutting and shooting was done by the professional bad men, though they did their share. Almost any trivial dispute was regarded as a legitimate excuse for taking life, and few of the killers were adequately punished. An early history of Nevada contains the following illuminating paragraphs in its chapter on homicides:

"A Mexican was killed in Light's saloon, Bill Burns and Jeff Standifer both claiming the honor of firing the shot."

(Continued on Page 38)

LESBIA

By Joseph Hergesheimer

ILLUSTRATED BY F. GRAHAM COOTES

"What is Lesbia? An Elevated State of Being for the Elect of the South?"

A CHERRY party was in progress at Mrs. Luke Baldwin's place, Highlawn. The house, a rectangular structure of mellow brick softened by flowering vines, crowned a knoll thinly covered with coarse grass, shaded by a grove of towering chestnuts, that afforded a wide prospect of fertile valley and distant, ultramarine ranges. It was late afternoon, and the shadows of the chestnut trees fell far down the sun-browned slope, and lay in cool bands over the bright summer dresses and white flannels of the guests.

They were gathered principally about a great Chinese bowl of black cherries placed on the lawn, listening with subdued ripples of amusement to the high, clear pronouncements of Eily Daunt. Eily's crisp, independent comments, her stories pointed by an unconventional freedom of observation, multiplied in response to the appreciation of her audience. She was easily the youngest person present, a slender girl with a pointed chin, candid gray eyes and bright red hair simply arranged. Her gown was simple too; those about her were far more elaborate; but there was not a woman present who failed to realize that Eily Daunt's dress had cost more than any five others there together. It had the patent simplicity of the famous maker whose name was sewed in the waistband. The apple-green ribbon about her waist was pinned with a bar of emeralds, there were superlative emeralds on her hand, and a bag of soft gold mesh, dropped carelessly on the grass beside her, sparkled with the jewels that were set in its clasp.

The men about Eily with frank delight urged her to further extravagant sallies. Mercer Lawrence, seated informally on the lawn at her side, moodily wished that she was not so generally entertaining. He wanted to occupy her thought as an individual, and not be regarded as merely one of an appreciative group. His expressive, thinly fine lips, his nervous countenance, were stamped with palpable discontent; he sat enveloped in an impatient, sullen silence.

I

TO JOHN LAWRENCE, riding up over the driveway on a sleek bay hunter, the cherry party presented a seductive appearance after the hot dust of the sunny road. He turned from the drive and approached across the lawn, dismounting at a convenient sapling, to which he secured his horse. As he proceeded gravely toward the group about the cherry bowl he saw an unfamiliar feminine figure beside Mercer, his brother, and surmised that it was the girl from the North visiting the Grangers—the daughter of a New York Irish contractor who had been to school with Marvel Granger. It was, he had realized, a strange intimacy for Marvel, usually so rigid in her insistence upon family; and he was mildly curious to discover the bond that had outlasted the ephemeral attachments of boarding school.

He removed his drooping, black felt hat, and the level rays of the sun fell upon his gaunt countenance and steady, dark gaze. His garb, in keeping with the sleek hunter, was informal for afternoon, but his manner was ceremonious—the gesture with which he removed his hat was unconsciously a stately sweep.

It was evidently this formality of John Lawrence's that his brother rose to celebrate in the exaggerated manner of a showman.

"At last, Miss Daunt"—Mercer addressed the girl with the emeralds—"we can show you the real thing—the Virginia gentleman of fiction done in actual life—my brother, John Lawrence of Lesbia."

When her acknowledgment and the familiar greetings had subsided John Lawrence found himself forming contradictory impressions of Marvel Granger's friend. He thought at first that her manner was too assured for her evident youth; she seemed to him overconfident, even a little loud. Then he realized that that opinion had been caused by her extraordinary vitality. He had never before known such a vivid personality as Eily Daunt. She sparkled in the repressed, conventional circle of his lifelong friends like a spot touched by a ray of sunlight in a shadowed valley. Her exuberance of youth, her sheer impertinence of being, made John Lawrence suddenly feel old. Then he was conscious of its warming him to a degree of interest, a laughing response, that he had long thought himself incapable of holding.

However, he took but small actual part in the verbal sallies speeding across the Chinese bowl. He was habitually a silent man, and spoke only upon just deliberation, but he wished now that he possessed a fund of easy gayety. Mercer, he knew, was notable for such desirable trifles, and he was surprised at the younger's present almost morose silence.

He speculated on it for a moment, his serious gaze resting upon Eily Daunt's mobile countenance; and, with the insight born of his long care of Mercer, he sensed the cause of his brother's discontent. Instinctively, almost with a palpable sigh, he retreated mentally from the girl that had so immediately commanded his attention.

A slight impatience, a momentary rebellion, followed, but he resolutely put them from him. If Mercer already liked the girl well enough to exhibit his feeling almost publicly he, John Lawrence, "Old John," must consider his brother's interest. His manner grew once more withdrawn, formal; his thin face lost its smile. He wondered what he could do to assist Mercer if the latter formed a serious attachment for Eily Daunt?

He remembered her name because on first hearing it had struck him as unusual. Marvel had assured him that its possessor was unusual too; and he had accepted that assertion as such statements are commonly met, with the feeling that he would find it unjustified. He had been wrong. Eily Daunt was—was exceptional; he could readily understand how Marvel, how Mercer, how anybody ——

His thoughts were ruthlessly dispelled by Eily's direct, laughing assault.

"What is Lesbia?" she demanded. "I hear it solemnly pronounced at every turn. Your brother said 'John Lawrence of Lesbia' as an irreverent person might have said 'of Paradise.' Is it an elevated state of being for the elect of the South, a sort of eternal Before the War?"

"It's the grandest estate in Pindar County," Mrs. Luke Baldwin volunteered in a ripe drawl—"a memory of old splendor to comfort us in these lean days."

"Lesbia"—Mercer Lawrence took up the burden, resuming the manner of a showman—"is a peerless specimen of the classic Virginia home lingering unsullied amid its historic acres. It was built on a royal grant with English brick, before the Revolution, by the noble progenitor of the American house of Lawrence, and has never gone out of the possession of that illustrious family.

"Passing through the pure Doric entrance, and turning to the left wing, we view a room in which have slept four presidents of our glorious Republic. The actual bed is before you, the very sheets between which the great George extended his incomparable limbs. In the hall are paintings of departed Lawrences, all the men, you will observe, in the full regalia of generals. Farther on we come to the office for the administration of the estate; here no dust later than that of the Civil War is tolerated. Now the pantries, with their priceless recipes for blueberry cordial and tallow dips ——"

"Mercer!" Mrs. Luke Baldwin remonstrated; "you must really stop. Miss Daunt will think that you are cynical or something else low."

Eily Daunt still interrogated John Lawrence. "Everyone has answered but yourself," she complained, "and I asked you originally."

He regarded her gravely, pausing before his answer. Then:

"Lesbia?" he said simply; "it's my home."

The spirit of fun vanished from the girl's countenance; her gray gaze enveloped and studied John Lawrence. It was evident that he had advanced from the indistinguishable background of life into the scope of her immediate interest.

"I have never had a home," she told him slowly; "I've lived in schools and houses and hotels. I should like to see yours."

He forced himself to turn to Mercer, who was standing, with his fine lips still set in a slight, scoffing smile, at her shoulder.

"You must fetch Miss Daunt for tea," he said. "Lesbia is looking particularly well now, and it's a pleasant ride."

"But you'll have to go soon, Eily," Marvel Granger laughed. "I'm told John Lawrence is going to sell it to a pottery company to dig out the clay and build kilns."

Mercer Lawrence's expression suddenly hardened. Lines appeared on the elder brother's countenance, adding perceptibly to his apparent age. A palpable weariness fell like a heavy cloak upon his shoulders, but he spoke with crisp decision:

"Lesbia," he declared, "is not for sale."

II

THE law office of John and Mercer Carrol Lawrence opened upon the flagged Courthouse Square of Stenton. The square was inclosed on three sides by old brick façades, dusty windows and cool, cavernous doorways; the fourth was occupied by the white bulk of the courthouse, its graceful lantern and a crowning bronze statue of Justice lifted high against a blazing expanse of blue. Without, the bright heat was intense, but it was darker and temperate where John Lawrence sat at his desk. Green-slatted jalousies subdued the sun, creating a thin gray gloom in which the steel engravings of severe legal personages on the walls, the board floor partially covered with coco matting, the cold Franklin stove and old mahogany furnishings were drawn into a silvery harmony.

It was a setting strikingly appropriate to its present occupant. John Lawrence, clad in black, his austere, pallid countenance intent upon a legal parchment, seemed one of the steel engravings stepped from its frame.

This illusion, however, was sharply dispelled by the entrance of Mercer in light flannels. He had thin hair precisely brushed, and his regular countenance, as usual, bore an irritated discontent as he threw a newspaper on to his desk and settled abruptly into a chair.

"Hilles has succeeded in getting that branch of the Tennessee and Buffalo through Cardinal," he said fretfully; "the railway company gave him eighteen thousand for his lower pastures. Four factories have been laid down and a general boom started already."

"Joel Hilles'll miss those meadows for his horses; there's no better grass in Virginia."

"Horses!" Mercer echoed contemptuously. "Grass! He won't bother with that fodder. He'll get a car. He's alive, like the majority of Virginians today, and not ambling along in a rut of tradition." He paused, opened a drawer, but shut it with a bang and swung toward his brother.

"Southerners like you are a joke now," he shot out of an uncontrollable exasperation; "curiosities from the time of Andrew Jackson and canal boats. They're a joke, but it's not funny to be tied to one. Look how your infernal sense of dignity has limited our law practice. We get all the venerable ciphers on the calendar, all the worthless estates in the county; we haven't had a decent fee in five years; we're busy taking care of old ladies with legacies of shinplasters, and it's growing worse."

"We were born into certain obligations," John Lawrence returned patiently; "they came to us with our name, with the practice. The Lawrences have been counselors-at-law in some families for two hundred years. It's true that in many cases the importance of the estates has dwindled, but we can't deny advice to old connections who look to us for assistance, for the integrity of their few dollars."

"But when you get a chance at a big thing you turn it down for some absurd, antiquated prejudice."

"I wouldn't defend McCann against a bribery charge. He has been corrupting the county for twenty years."

"Bah! You still think politics and the law are occupations for what you call gentlemen. You act as if life were a polite game of chess, a thing of flourishes and smiles. It's a struggle for success, for survival at any price."

"There are," John Lawrence returned, "certain rules necessary for the barest survival of a Lawrence."

"Now you're in the holy of holies," the younger declared—"your honor, our honor, the ancestral honor. Life's a compromise."

John Lawrence gathered some papers and a case book into a green cloth bag, and prepared to rise.

"Did you set an afternoon to take Miss Daunt to Lesbia?" he asked in an effort to bring the acrimony, the futility, of their discussion to an end.

Mercer, whose resentment had mounted beyond check, swore at the mention of Lesbia.

"That's the worst rot of all," he cried, "to keep that place without even properly farming it; to half support a six-hundred-acre luxury, a house with twenty empty rooms, for an idiotic, sentimental fancy. It was bad enough when it must have been sold at a sacrifice; but now to refuse the Valencia people's offer, to throw away twenty-five thousand dollars ——" For a breath words failed him; he grew tense, white with anger. Then: "That money would give me—us—a chance, capital. If I got a start, had something to build on, I shouldn't have to stay buried in an office like a mortuary vault, tied to a practice among the ghosts of the past. All over the state men are cashing in their traditions for gold, turning yesterday into to-morrow, all except a few cursed ——"

"Lesbia is not for sale," John Lawrence interrupted. He rose, tall and thin and somber, his bag clasped in a long, delicate hand. "It's useless to go over this again. A man can't sell his soul, and Lesbia should be a part of yours. It's our greatness, our life, our invincible memories. We have been faithful to it, kept it untouched, through a past that has betrayed and ruined so much that was fine. It is the symbol of our long service, of this office that has never been bought and has never forgotten a trust." He stopped abruptly and moved toward the door. His face, in the cool gloom, was like marble. But he paused before leaving, turning with a kindlier manner to the younger man. "Thursday would be a good day for our tea party," he said. "Ask Marvel—anyone you like ——"

III

JOHN LAWRENCE drove slowly through the coppery light of the failing day toward home. The road wound, a riband of soft dust, between lush, smooth hills, through wooded hollows to the gateway of Lesbia. The dwelling drew a low, gleaming white façade on a vivid green rise. A stable boy in frayed leggings led away the horse, and John Lawrence mounted the sweeping steps that rose directly from the sod. Within, the hall was high and bare, with a waxed floor, the subdued color, cool vermilion and murky blue, of old oil paintings on the walls, and a curving staircase with a slender polished teak rail.

He continued to the second floor, where he knocked upon a tall, paneled door. A thin voice bade him enter.

A round, faded countenance set in silvery curls was turned to him from the snowy expanse of a great bed. It was his Cousin Cassie, who had been housekeeper at Lesbia through the long years since his mother's death. He drew a chair to the side of the bed, where he sat holding in his warm grasp her hand traced with faint violet veins.

"I was downstairs for a spell today," she informed him, "and, my soul, it tuckered me all out! But it's a good thing I went—those niggers had things seven ways. It makes me fret to think of you without right attention. Is Mercer coming home to-night?"

"He'll be at the Grangers'. A friend of Marvel's is there—a girl from New York." John Lawrence had a momentary, potent vision of Eily Daunt, a fleet sense of vivid life, youth, on the still monotony of the chamber.

"Does Mercer like her?" his Cousin Cassie demanded. "Is she fitten for him, for a Lawrence, for Lesbia?"

"Yes," he answered slowly, "I think for all that. I think ——" He broke off, possessed by the memory of Eily's voice.

"Then I wish he'd marry her. A girl like you say she is would settle Mercer down. He needs a heap of settling. Can't you smooth it along? Your mother said to me only afore she died—she said: 'I'm not afraid for John, but, with his father gone, I'm worried about Mercer.'"

"She spoke to me," John Lawrence said. "I promised to do what I could."

"You've done it too," the other assured him; "no parent could have been more faithful. Mercer's dreadful trying at times. Now this girl ——" Her voice was lost in an involuntary gasp of suffering; a sudden whiteness settled like chalk dust on her countenance. The pain subsided, a faint color fluttered into her pendulous cheeks, and her eyes held a dim, strange light.

"You're a good little boy, John," she said in a small, throaty voice. . . . "Some sweetbread and my yellow tomato preserve." She fell into an instant slumber, her hand clasping his with fixed, fragile fingers.

He sat without moving while the dusk thickened in the chamber, odorous with rose potpourri crumbling in a glazed Canton jar. He recalled his mother, a pale memory from boyhood, a slim, worn shape in a Persian shawl, a pallid mask of beauty with hollow, blue temples. He heard again her ghostly voice; he heard his assurance that he would watch over his brother.

And now Eily Daunt! He repeated the name with soundless lips. It was a lovely and unusual name, an unusual and lovely person. . . . Here at Lesbia with Mercer. Cousin Cassie had asked him to "smooth along" such a possibility. The clasping fingers relaxed; he rose, moved silently toward the door. His heart, inexplicably, was as heavy as lead.

"I Think I Never Want to See You or Any Other Lawrence Again"

IV

TEA had already been served on the porch at Lesbia when, on Thursday, John Lawrence mounted the steps from the lawn. He was reluctant to go forward to meet Eily Daunt. Her high-pitched laughter, ringing from above, had disconcerted him. Marvel Granger made a place for him at the table, and he found himself opposite Eily. Her bright hair, under a tilted straw hat, was folded like a boy's about her neck; and she was dressed in filmy lavender, with a broad belt of old hammered Dutch silver. Mercer, it was evident, had relinquished all effort to dissemble his infatuation; his gaze followed Eily Daunt's every gesture. Marvel regarded his absorption with patent satisfaction.

"Lesbia—heavenly spot!" John Lawrence realized that Eily was addressing him, and made a hurried, conventional answer. "I want to explore," she continued. Mercer rose promptly. Eily Daunt studied him. "No," she finally decided, "I think not with you. I'm certain your brother—if he'll take me—would be more thorough."

John Lawrence's diffidence increased at the resentful expression which settled upon his brother's face. He hesitated, while Eily rose.

"I'll go by myself if it's necessary," she announced.

Mercer said: "You're right, as usual—Old John knows personally every hallowed brick."

So it was finally Old John who found himself walking at her side through the high, cool hall. They examined the purple countenance of Colonel Willy Lawrence, painted in Continentals, and the slender figure of a boy in a short blue jacket.

"Winthrop Lawrence," John explained, "midshipman; killed at thirteen in his first engagement."

Eily Daunt regarded the portraits with profound attention. She proceeded, absorbed, from still chamber to still chamber, where behind screened windows old mahogany glimmered, pale gilt shone, mirrors held veiled perspectives of the girl's intense modernity moving through the old peace faintly spiced with camphor.

"I didn't know it was true," she said at last. "Of course I've seen the outsides of things in Italy; but this is not walls, floors; it's magic—I can hear the past moving up the stairs and old fiddling in the halls. I have a fancy for a gavotte, Mr. Lawrence." She made a grave curtsy.

They were on the second floor, and he blundered hastily into the first speech that offered.

"I wonder," he said, "if you would care to see Cousin Cassie? She's sick and would appreciate it tremendously. I told her that—that you were staying with the Grangers."

At her instant affirmative he knocked at his cousin's door.

The invalid had failed visibly in the past few days; her hand moved uncertainly to lie in John Lawrence's; she spoke in a voice with sudden, flutelike stops and quivers.

"This is Miss Daunt," the man told her—"Marvel's friend from New York."

It was evident that she was unable to command her memory, and he was at a loss to establish Eily's identity in the failing mind.

"Perhaps," he ventured, "Mercer has spoken to you about her."

At that familiar name a new energy gathered on the face against the pillow. "Your mother said to me only afore her death," she reiterated: "'I'm not afraid for John, but Mercer ——'" She broke off. Then unexpectedly clear: "I'm going, John," she continued. "You're a real Lawrence—the Honorable Lawrences they called them—and you'll be faithful to ——"

He laid a gentle palm upon her mouth. "Nonsense," he declared lightly; "you'll be down again after the niggers the day after to-morrow."

Outside the room Eily Daunt regarded him with fathomless eyes. "The Honorable Lawrences," she repeated half aloud. Then: "No more, please; it hurts here." She laid her hand above her heart.

She met his gaze so steadily, with such an intimate interest, that, greatly disturbed, he turned away.

"You don't approve of me," she said suddenly, "do you?"

"But I admire you very much," John Lawrence answered laboriously; "and Mercer is your happy victim."

She ignored absolutely the reference to his brother. "Do you always express your admiration for a young person by carefully avoiding her? You haven't been once to the Grangers' since I arrived."

"I get about very little," he told her; "even in Stenton I'm regarded as ancient history. Mercer does that sort of thing for the Lawrences."

"You'll end by making me detest that Mercer," she declared, and swiftly descended the stair.

Mercer's witty greeting, John Lawrence realized, was particularly ill-timed; he saw Eily Daunt harden under the assault of chaffing laughter. She told Marvel Granger that she wished to return to Stenton.

V

EILY DAUNT left for New York before John Lawrence again saw her. His Cousin Cassie died the morning following Eily's visit to her room, and he was occupied by the arrangements for the funeral. He moved temporarily into Stenton until a satisfactory housekeeper could be found for Lesbia, and countless necessary trivialities occupied his time. His thoughts, however, evaded the tasks he set them and returned eternally to Eily Daunt. He endeavored to think of her in connection with his brother, with the duty he had assumed, but without success. A vision of Eily palpitating with life, with vivid beauty, filled his mind; her clear voice hung perpetually in his hearing.

He was seated in the thin gloom of the office in Stenton, ostensibly occupied with the papers before him, but in reality lost in the memory of Eily under the high ceilings of his home. He raised his head, nodded absently as his brother entered and flung himself into a chair. John Lawrence turned to his papers, groping after their illusive facts, and when he looked up again he saw that Mercer was bowed over his desk, his face hidden in an outstretched arm. He rose, crossed the room to his brother and dropped a hand on his shoulder.

"Do you love her, Mercer?" he asked gently. "Do you know," he continued more slowly, "if she—if Miss Daunt—cares for you?"

There was no response.

Mercer Lawrence sat sharply erect. "How could she say?" he demanded harshly. "She—she likes me; she said that when I asked her to marry me. She would have to see a great deal more of me first. It was all natural, reasonable. Then she went away to New York while I stayed here."

"You must go where she will see you."

Mercer Lawrence rose, white with passion. "To New York," he demanded, "dog poor! This damned practice wouldn't take me beyond Washington. Or if it got me to New York I'd be left on a street corner. It's highly respectable—I can exist in Stenton; but to follow Eily Daunt with nothing else ——" He broke off with clenched hands and quivering lips.

"You must go to her," John Lawrence firmly repeated.

"How?" the other ground out. "What money we have must build a new fence at Lesbia, must drain the low meadow, repair the room where four presidents slept. It's Lesbia, Lesbia and the noble departed. Not a word, not a dollar, for a man that's merely alive."

"You must go to New York," the other said again wearily.

"Lesbia! Lesbia! Lesbia!" his brother mocked him with increasing bitterness.

John Lawrence grew cold. He was suddenly conscious of a great spiritual loneliness, a sense of pending, irremediable loss. A wave of memories, associations, dreams, beat upon him, an overwhelming tumult at the core of his being, opposing the words which he forced himself deliberately to pronounce:

"It will be possible for you to go."

The resentment on Mercer Lawrence's face changed to hopeful surprise. "Old John!" he exclaimed; "where can you get it?"

"From the Valencia Pottery Company."

Mercer's hope gave place to awe. "Do you mean," he demanded incredulously, "to sell Lesbia?"

The older brother returned to his desk. He sat down awkwardly, conscious that his forehead, the palms of his hands, were wet. He turned over the papers that lay before him, intently scanning them. Mercer's hand gripped his arm.

"Old John," he said huskily, "it will kill you to let Lesbia go."

John Lawrence returned steadily: "I'll communicate with the agent to-day; you must get off. You were quite right; the living are more important than the dead, than traditions or stones. I have no doubt I valued certain possessions, qualities, too dearly. I'm out of keeping with to-day, with progress, the New South." His voice dropped to silence. He realized that all the aspects of his past existence, that now Lesbia itself, were pale, unimportant, compared with the thought of Eily Daunt.

"You Mean That I Must Pay for My Blind Confidence in You"

When Mercer had left, overflowing with a fresh activity of plans and aspirations, John Lawrence dispatched the letter signifying his willingness to dispose of his home. After that he sat motionless while the dusk deepened in the office. The lines on his clean-shaven, severe countenance deepened with the shadows. Once he muttered, as if to a ghostly presence before him, to a countenance marked by suffering and maternal apprehension: "I've done everything that I could."

"If You Offer the Least Opposition I Shall Kill You Immediately"

VI

ON A CRISP morning late in November, John Lawrence found, at his breakfast place at Miss Letitia Coulter's select boarding house in Stenton, a letter from his brother postmarked New York. Miss Letitia Coulter, an incredibly ungainly woman with an obviously false front of metallic brown hair askew on her plaster-white forehead, announced the letter and its source, inserting a tentative interest in its contents.

He evaded her questioning, and deferred reading Mercer's communication until he had reached his office. Even there he delayed an appreciable time before opening it. He had had three or four letters from Mercer since the latter's departure early in September, and he had followed the same procedure with each one. He dreaded, in spite of a bitter self-arraignment, what they might contain. He tore open this last with an abrupt gesture. John Lawrence saw in a flash that Eily had not yet promised to marry his brother. With an easy deliberation he read the letter.

It was mainly occupied with the details of Mercer's association with a Northern firm of cotton brokers, his permanent engagement to work in New York. In a bare line at the end he wrote that Eily was leaving for Stenton—the Grangers had asked her South for the fox hunting—and that Mercer was returning home for a fortnight.

Eily once more in Stenton! With that part of his consciousness over which he exerted a direct control, John Lawrence wished that she had not returned until a definite understanding had been reached with Mercer; but the greater part of his being, the part instinctively, rebelliously human, thrilled with pleasure at the thought of seeing her again, of riding with her across the brown autumn fields, through the silver frost of the immaculate mornings.

He read over the first part of the letter. The money Mercer had carried North from the sale of Lesbia had rapidly dwindled, checks drawn since had attenuated the younger brother's share, and now an exceptional opportunity offered at Wooten & Company's, the brokers in question. They would, in consideration of a moderate investment of capital, take a young man—in short, Mercer Lawrence—into the firm. He wondered if "Old John" could see his way. . . . "Splendid opening in a long-established concern. . . . Certain to pay back." Other papers and statements were following.

Eily Daunt riding through the autumn evening, the aromatic blue haze of burning cornstalks!

The credentials of Wooten & Company soon followed, proving to John Lawrence's grave scrutiny highly satisfactory. It was undoubtedly a promising field for Mercer's energy. He smiled quietly at the other's conception of a moderate investment. In Stenton it would be held of princely magnitude. His brother had quickly absorbed the New York attitude toward money. He signed the check, which made Mercer an authentic modern trader, in a beautiful script, a script fine and dignified and upright.

VII

IT SEEMED incredible to John Lawrence that his image of riding beside Eily Daunt should in every particular be realized. Yet it was. His glance swept over her, easily sitting one of the Grangers' horses. Her bright red hair was tightly braided and tied with a black ribbon, her hat hung from its elastic on her arm. They had momentarily left the hunt; he was guiding her through a lane to a point where, long experience had taught him, the fox would turn from the stubble into the hills. From beyond a wood came the far, eager yelping of the hounds.

Eily Daunt rode without talking. It was evident that she found sharp delight in the swinging run of the hunt, the easy flight over fences and sodded streams. John Lawrence was lost in the keenest pleasure of his existence; but it was a pleasure that at this minute he had no desire to analyze. It was a brief passage without connection with his daily life afoot, and he accepted it as such, lost himself in its supreme allurement.

They soon saw a red coat through the fringe of the wood, and were swept back into the hunt, pouring over a fence and pounding up a sharp rise. Mercer joined them and John Lawrence dropped behind.

Eily Daunt, he knew, had not yet accepted Mercer's offer of marriage; but neither, his brother had told him, had she definitely refused her consent.

"She likes me," Mercer had said hopefully; "and promised me an answer before she went back."

The hounds lost the scent and cast about in yapping confusion. The day was drawing to an end, the hunt was across many hills from Stenton, and many of the members were cantering home. John Lawrence turned his horse and returned slowly alone. He followed a deeply shaded road about the base of the hills, through a bottom, where suddenly he overtook Eily Daunt and Mercer progressing at a slow amble. He tightened his rein, passing them with a commonplace, when, all abreast, they emerged from under high banks on a sweep of ground rising to a scene of intense activity.

A long white dwelling stood with blank windows upon a defiled land. The doors of the main entrance had been torn from their hinges, leaving a bare, high hall open to the elements. Shattered panes of glass were stopped with rags and paper, and a jagged hole had been broken through the wall, through which a stovepipe projected, emitting a trailing smudge of black smoke. Raw planks had been laid across the livid, open scars of clay that cut a lawn occupied by a great rectangle of bricks and littered straw; while a stationary engine was working with short, hoarse coughs, and showering soot upon a trampling line of workmen.

Eily Daunt stopped. She said: "I don't remember this."

Mercer's gaze was lowered, and John Lawrence pronounced a single word: "Lesbia."

A swift concern, an overwhelming dismay, took possession of the girl. She dropped the reins on her horse's neck and clasped her hands.

"How unspeakable!" she cried. "How absolutely awful!" She turned to Mercer. "You told me," she continued, "that your brother had decided to sell Lesbia, and I heard some talk about a pottery company. But I hadn't realized . . . this. It's—it's wicked beyond words!

(Continued on Page 33)

THE RED BADGE OF MERCY

By Mary Roberts Rinehart

Litter Bearers in the Forest of Argonne

IMMEDIATELY on the declaration of war by the Powers the vast machinery of mercy was put in the field. The mobilization of the Red Cross army began—that great army which is of no nation but of all nations, of no creed but of all faiths, of one flag for all the world and that flag the banner of the Crusaders.

The Red Cross is the wounded soldier's last defense. Worn as a brassard on the left arm of its volunteers, it conveys a higher message than the Victoria Cross of England, the Iron Cross of Germany, or the Cross of the Legion of Honor of France. It is greater than cannon, greater than hate, greater than blood-lust, greater than vengeance. It triumphs over wrath as good triumphs over evil. Direct descendant of the cross of the Christian faith, it carries on to every battlefield the words of the Man of Peace: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

The care of the wounded in war has been the problem of the ages. Richard the Lion-Hearted took a hospital ship to the coast of Palestine. The German people of the Middle Ages had their wounded in battle treated by their wives, who followed the army for that purpose. It remained for Frederick the First of Prussia to establish a military service in connection with a standing army.

With the invention of firearms battlefield surgery faced new problems, notably hemorrhage, and took a step forward to meet these altered conditions. It was a French surgeon who solved the problem of hemorrhage by tying the torn blood vessels above the injury. To England goes the credit for the prevention of sepsis, as far as it may be prevented on a battlefield.

As far as it may be prevented on a battlefield! For that is the question that confronts the machinery of mercy to-day. Transportation to the hospitals has been solved, to a large extent, by motor ambulances, by hospital trains, by converted channel steamers connecting the Continent with England. Hospitals in the western field of war are now plentiful and some are well equipped. The days of bedding wounded men down on straw are largely in the past, but how to prevent the ravages of dirt, the so-called "dirt diseases" of gaseous gangrene, blood poisoning, tetanus, is the problem.

Exchanging the Hopelessly Wounded

I DID not see the first exchange of hopelessly wounded prisoners that took place at Flushing, while I was on the Continent. It must have been a tragic sight. They lined up in two parties at the railroad station, German surgeons and nurses with British prisoners, British surgeons and nurses with German prisoners.

Then they were counted off, I am told. Ten Germans came forward, ten British, in wheeled chairs, on crutches, the sightless ones led. The exchange was made. Then ten more, and so on. What a sight! What a horror! No man there would ever be whole again. There were men without legs, without arms, blind men, men twisted by fearful body wounds. Two hundred and sixteen British officers and men, and as many Germans, were exchanged that day.

"They were, however, in the best of spirits," said the London Times of the next day!

At Folkestone a crowd was waiting on the quay, and one may be sure that heads were uncovered as the men limped, or were led or wheeled, down the gangplank. Kindly English women gave them nosegays of snowdrops and violets.

And then they went on—to what? For a few weeks, or months, they will be the objects of much kindly sympathy. In the little towns they live in visitors will be taken to see them. The neighborhood will exert itself in kindness. But after a time interest will die away, and besides, there will be many to divide sympathy. The blind man, or the man without a leg or an arm, will cease to be the neighborhood's responsibility and will become its burden.

What then? For that is the problem that is facing each nation at war—how to make a whole life out of a fragment, to teach that the spirit may be greater than the body, to turn to usefulness these sad and hopeless by-products of battlefields.

The ravages of war—to the lay mind—consist mainly of wounds. As a matter of fact, they divide themselves into several classes, all different, all requiring different care, handling and treatment, and all, in their several ways, dependent for help on the machinery of mercy. In addition to injuries on the battlefield there are illnesses contracted on the field, septic conditions following even slight abrasions or minor wounds, and nervous conditions—sometimes approximating a temporary insanity—due to prolonged strain, to incessant firing close at hand, to depression following continual lack of success, to the sordid and hideous presence of unburied dead, rotting in full view for weeks and even months.

During the last winter frozen feet, sometimes requiring amputation, and even in mild cases entailing great suffering, took thousands of men out of the trenches. The trouble resulted from standing for hours and even days in various depths of cold water, and was sometimes given the name "water bite." Soldiers were instructed to rub their boots inside and out with whale oil, and to grease their feet and legs. Unluckily, only fortunately situated men could be so supplied, and the suffering was terrible. Surgeons who have observed many cases of both frost and water bite say that, curiously enough, the left foot is more frequently and seriously affected than the right. The reason given is that right-handed men automatically use the right foot more than the left, make more movements with it. The order to remove boots twice a day, for a few moments while in the trenches, had a beneficial effect among certain battalions.

Her Name is Glory, and She is a Southern Girl

War's Open-Air Treatment

THE British soldier who wraps tightly a khaki puttee round his leg and thus hampers circulation has been a particular sufferer in spite of the precaution he takes to grease his feet and legs before going into the trenches.

The presence of septic conditions has been appalling.

This is a dirty war. Men are taken back to the hospitals in incredible states of filth. Their stiffened clothing must frequently be cut off to reveal, beneath, vermin-covered bodies. When the problem of transportation is a serious one, as after a great battle, men must lie in sheds or railway stations, waiting their turn. Wounds turn green and hideous. Their first-aid dressing, originally surgically clean, becomes infected. Lucky the man who has had a small vial of iodine to pour over the gaping surface of his wound. For the time, at least, he is well off.

The very soil of Flanders seems polluted. British surgeons are sighing for the clean dust of the Boer war of South Africa, although they cursed it at the time. That it is not the army occupation which is causing the grave infections of Flanders and France is shown by the fact that the trouble dates from the beginning of the war. It is not that living in a trench undermines the vitality of the men and lays them open to infection. On the contrary, with the exception of frost bite, there is a curious absence of such troubles as would ordinarily result from exposure, cold and constant wetting.

The open-air life has apparently built up the men. Again and again the extraordinary power of resistance shown has astonished the surgeons. It is as if, in forcing men to face overwhelming hardships, a watchful Providence had granted them overwhelming vitality.

Perhaps the infection of the soil, the typhoid-carrying waters that seep through and into the trenches, the tetanus and gangrene that may infect the simplest wounds, are due to the long intensive cultivation of that fertile country, to the fertilization by organic matter of its fields. Doubtless the vermin that cover many of the troops form the connecting link between the soil and the infected men. In many places gasoline is being delivered to the troopers to kill these pests, and it is a German army joke that before a charge on a Russian trench it is necessary to send ahead men to scatter insect powder! So serious is the problem in the east indeed that an official order from Berlin now requires all cars returning from Russia to be placarded

The Problem Facing Each Nation is to Make a Whole Life Out of a Fragment

"*Aus Russland!* Before using again thoroughly sterilize and unlouse!" And no upholstered cars are allowed to be used.

Generally speaking, a soldier is injured either in his trench or in front of it in the waste land between the confronting armies. In the latter case, if the lines are close together the situation is still further complicated. It may be and often is impossible to reach him at all. He must lie there for hours or even for days of suffering, until merciful death overtakes him. When he can be rescued he is, and many of the bravest deeds of this war have been acts of such salvage. In addition to the work of the ambulance corps and of volunteer soldiers who often venture out into a rain of death to bring in fallen officers and comrades in the western field, some five hundred ambulance dogs are being used by the Allies to locate the wounded.

When a man is injured in the trenches his companions take care of him until night—then it is possible to move him. His first-aid packet is opened, a sterilized bandage produced, and the dressing applied to the wound. Frequently he has a small bottle of iodine and the wound is first painted with that. In cases where iodine is used at once, chances of infection are greatly lessened. But he must lie in the trench until night, when the ambulances come up. His comrades make him as comfortable as they can. He lies on their overcoats, his head frequently on his own pack.

Fighting goes on about him, above him. Other comrades fall in the trench and are carried and laid near him. In the intervals of fighting, men bring the injured men water. For that is the first cry—a great and insistent need—water. When they cannot get water from the canteens they drink what is in the bottom of the trench.

At last night falls. The evening artillery duel during the winter months was greatly lessened during the night, and infantry fire was only that of "snipers." But over the trench and over the line of communication behind the trench hang always the enemy's "starlights."

Followers of the Red-Cross Banner

THE ambulances come up. They cannot come as far as the trenches, but stretchers are brought and the wounded men are lifted out as tenderly as possible.

Many soldiers have tried to tell of the horrors of a night journey in an ambulance or transport; careful driving is out of the question. Near the front the ambulance can have no lights, and the roads everywhere have been torn up by shells.

Men die in transit, and dying hark back to early days. They call for their mothers, for their wives. They dictate messages that no one can take down. Unloaded at railway stations, the dead are separated from the living and piled in tiers on trucks. The wounded lie about on stretchers on the station floor. Sometimes they are operated on there, by the light of a candle, it may be, or of a smoking lamp. When it is a well-equipped station there is the mercy of chloroform, the blessed release of morphia, but more times than I care to think of at night, there has been no chloroform and no morphia.

France has sixty hospital trains, England twelve, Belgium not so many.

I have seen trains drawing in with their burden of wounded men. They travel slowly, come to a gradual stop, without jolting or jarring; but instead of the rush of passengers to alight, which usually follows the arrival of a train, there is silence, infinite quiet. Then, somewhere, a door is unhurriedly opened. Maybe a priest alights and looks about him. Perhaps it is a nurse who steps down and takes a comprehensive survey of conditions. There is no talking, no uproar. A few men may come up to assist in lifting out the stretchers, an ambulance driver who salutes and indicates with a gesture where his car is stationed. There are no onlookers. This is business, the grim business of war. The line of stretchers on the station platform grows. The men lie on them, impassive. They have waited so long. They have lain on the battlefield, in the trench, behind the line at the dressing shed, waiting, always waiting. What is a little time more or less, now?

The patience of the injured! I have been in many hospitals. I have seen pneumonia and typhoid patients lying in the fearful apathy of disease. They are very sad to see, very tragic, but their patience is the lethargy of half consciousness. Their fixed eyes see visions. The patience of the wounded is the resignation of alert faculties.

Once I saw a boy dying. He was a dark-haired, brown-eyed lad of eighteen. He had had a leg shattered the day before, and he had lain for hours unattended on the battlefield. The leg had been amputated, and he was dying of loss of blood.

He lay alone, in a small room of what had once been a girls' school. He had asked to be propped up with pillows, so that he could breathe. His face was gray, and only his eyes were alive. They burned like coals. He was alone. The hospital was crowded, and there were others who could be saved. So he lay there, propped high, alone, and as conscious as I am now, and waited. The nurse came back at last, and his eyes greeted her.

There seemed to be nothing that I could do. Before his conscious eyes I was an intruder, gazing at him in his extremity. I went away. And now and then, when I hear this talk of national honor, and am carried away with a hot flame of resentment so that I, too, would cry for war, I seem to see that dying boy's eyes, looking through the mists that are vengeance and hatred and affronted pride, to war as it is—the end of hope, the gate of despair and agony and death.

I have just received these letters. The woman who wrote them will, I know, forgive me for publishing these extracts from them. She is a Belgian, married to an American. More clearly than any words of mine, they show where falls the burden of war:

"I have just learned that my youngest brother has been killed in action in Flanders. King Albert decorated him for conspicuous bravery on April 22d, and my poor boy went to his reward on April 26th. In my leaden heart, through my whirling brain, your words keep repeating themselves: 'For King and Country!' Yes, he died for them, and died a hero! I know only that his regiment, the Grenadiers, was decimated. My poor little boy! God pity us all, and save martyred Belgium!"

In a second letter:

"I inclose my dear little boy's obituary notice. He died at the head of his company and five hundred and seventy-four of his Grenadiers went down with him. Their regiment effectively checked the German advance, and in recognition General Joffre pinned the Cross of the Legion of Honor to his regimental colors. But we are left to mourn—though I do not begrudge my share of sorrow. The pain is awful, and I pray that by the grace of God you may never know what it means."

For King and Country!

The only leaven in this black picture of war as I have seen it, as it has touched me, has been the scarlet of the Red Cross. To a faith that the terrible scenes at the front had almost destroyed, came every now and then again the flash of the emblem of mercy. Hope, then, was not dead. There were hands to soothe and labor, as well as hands to kill. There was still brotherly love in the world. There was a courage that was not of hate. There was a patience that was not a lying in wait. There was a flag that was not of one nation, but of all the world; a flag that needed no recruiting station, for the ranks it led were always full to overflowing; a flag that stood between the wounded soldier and death; that knew no defeat but surrender to the will of the God of Battles.

And that flag I followed. To the front, to the field hospitals behind the trenches, to railway stations, to hospital trains and ships, to great base hospitals. I watched its ambulances on shelled roads. I followed its brassards as their wearers, walking gently, carried stretchers with their groaning burdens. And, whatever may have failed in this war—treaties, ammunition, elaborate strategies, even some of the humanities—the Red Cross as a symbol of service has never failed.

I was a critical observer. I am the graduate of a hospital training-school, and more or less for years I have been in touch with hospitals. I myself was enrolled under the Red Cross banner. I was prepared for efficiency. What I was not prepared for was the absolute self-sacrifice, the indifference to cost in effort, in very life itself, of a great army of men and women. I saw English aristocrats scrubbing floors; I found American surgeons working day and night under the very roar and rattle of guns. I found cultured women of every nation performing the most menial tasks. I found an army where all are equal—priests, surgeons, scholars, chauffeurs, poets, women of the stage, young girls who until now have been shielded from the very name of death—all enrolled under the red badge of mercy.

Thinking in Terms of Life and Death

ONE of the first hospitals I saw was in Calais. We entered a muddy courtyard through a gate, and the building loomed before us. It had been a girls' convent school, and was now a military hospital for both the French and British armies, one half the building being used by each. It was the first war hospital I had seen, and I was taken through the building by Major S ——, of the Royal Army Medical Corps. It was morning, and the corridors and stairs still bore the mud of the night, when the ambulances drive into the courtyard and the stretchers are carried up the stairs. It had been rather a quiet night, said Major S ——. The operations were already over, and now the work of cleaning up was going on.

He opened a door, and we entered a long ward.

I live in a great manufacturing city. Day by day its mills take their toll in crushed bodies. The sight of broken humanity is not new to me. In a general way, it is the price we pay for prosperity. Individually, men so injured are the losers in life's great struggle for food and shelter.

I had never before seen men dying of an ideal.

There is a terrible sameness in war hospitals. There are rows of beds, and in them rows of unshaven, white-faced men.

A French "75" Retrieved From the Fire of the Enemy

Some of them turn and look at visitors. Others lie very still, with their eyes fixed on the ceiling, or eternity, or God knows what. Now and then one is sleeping.

"He has slept since he came in," the nurse will say; "utter exhaustion."

Often they die. If there is a screen, the death takes place decently and in order, away from the eyes of the ward. But when there is no screen, it makes little difference. What is one death to men who have seen so many?

Once men thought in terms of a day's work, a night's sleep, of labor and play and love. But all over Europe to-day, in hospital and out, men are learning to think in terms of life and death. What will be the result? A general brutalizing? The loss of much that is fine? Perhaps. There are some who think that it will scourge men's souls clean of pettiness, teach them proportion, give them a larger outlook. But is it petty to labor and love? Is the duty of the nation greater than the duty of the home? Is the nation greater than the individual? Is the whole greater than the sum of its parts?

Ward after ward. Rows of quiet men. The occasional thump of a convalescent's crutch. The swish of a nurse's starched dress. The strangled grunt of a man as the dressing is removed from his wound. The hiss of coal in the fireplace at the end of the ward. Perhaps a priest beside a bed, or a nun. Over all, the heavy odor of drugs and disinfectants. Brisk nurses go about, cheery surgeons, but there is no real cheer. The ward is waiting.

Connecting Links Between Trenches and Home

I SAW a man who had been shot in the lungs. His lungs were filled with jagged pieces of steel. He was inhaling oxygen from a tank. There was an inhaler strapped over his mouth and nostrils, and the oxygen passed through a bottle of water, to moisten it before it entered his tortured lungs.

The water in the bottle seethed and bubbled, and the man lay and waited.

He was waiting for the next breath. Above the mask his eyes were fixed, intent. Would it come? Ah, that was not so bad. Almost a full breath that time. But he must have another, and another.

They are all waiting; for death, maybe; for home; for health again, or such travesty of health as may come, for the hospital is not an end but a means. It is an interval. It is the connecting link between the trenches and home, between war and peace, between life and death.

That one hospital had been a school. The children's lavatory is now the operating room. There are rows of basins along one side, set a trifle low for childish hands. When I saw them they were faintly rimmed with red. There was a locker room too. Once those lockers had held caps, no doubt, and overshoes, balls and other treasures. Now they contained torn and stained uniforms, weapons, knapsacks.

Does it matter how many wards there were, or how many surgeons? Do figures mean anything to us any more? When we read the other day that the British Army, a small army compared with the others, had lost already in dead, wounded and missing more than a quarter of a million men we could not visualize it. Multiply one ward by infinity, one hospital by thousands, and then try to realize the terrible by-products of war!

In that Calais hospital I saw for the first time the apparatus for removing bits of shell and shrapnel directly under the X-ray. Four years ago such a procedure would have been considered nothing short of suicidal to the operator.

At that time, in Vienna and Berlin, I saw men with hands hopelessly burned and distorted as the result of merely taking photographic plates with the X-ray. Then came in lead screens—screens of glass made with a lead percentage.

Now, as if science had prepared for this great emergency, operators use gloves saturated with a lead solution, and right-angled instruments, and operate directly in the ray. For cases where immediate extraction is inadvisable or unnecessary there is a stereoscopic arrangement of plates on the principle of our familiar stereoscope, which shows an image with perspective and locates the foreign body exactly.

One plate I saw had a story attached to it.

I was stopping in a private house where a tall Belgian surgeon lived. In the morning, after breakfast, I saw him carefully preparing a tray and carrying it upstairs. There was a sick boy, still in his teens, up there. As I passed the door I had seen him lying there, gaunt and pale, but plainly convalescent.

Happening to go up shortly after, I saw the tall surgeon by the side of the bed, the tray on his knees. And later I heard the story:

The boy was his son. During the winter he had been injured and taken prisoner. The father, in Calais, got word that his boy was badly injured and lying in a German hospital in Belgium. He was an only son.

I do not know how the frenzied father got into Belgium. Perhaps he crept through the German lines. He may have gone to sea and landed on the sand dunes near Zeebuggage. It does not matter how, for he found his boy. He went to the German authorities and got permission to move him to a private house. The boy was badly hurt. He had a bullet in the carotid artery, for one thing, and a fractured thigh. The father saw that his recovery, if it occurred at all, would be a matter of skillful surgery and unremitting care, but the father had a post at Calais and was badly needed.

He took a wagon to the hospital and got his boy. Then he drove, disguised I believe as a farmer, over the frontier into Holland. The boy was covered in the bottom of the wagon. In Holland they got a boat and went to Calais. All this, with that sharp-pointed German bullet in the carotid artery! And at Calais they took the plate I have mentioned and got out the bullet.

The last time I saw that brave father he was sitting beside his son, and the boy's hand was between both of his.

Nearly all the hospitals I saw had been schools. In one that I recall, the gentle-faced nuns, who by edict no longer exist in France, were still living in a wing of the school building. They have abandoned their quaint and beautiful habit for the ugly dress of the French provinces—odd little bonnets that sit grotesquely on the tops of their thin heads, stuffy black dresses, black cotton gloves. They try to be useful, but these that I saw were old and belonged to the old régime.

Under their bonnets their faces are placid, but their eyes are sad. Their schoolrooms are hospital wards, the tiny chapel is piled high with supplies; in the refectory, where decorous rows of small girls were wont to file in to the convent meals, unthinkable horrors of operations go on all day and far into the night. The Hall of the Holy Rosary is a convalescent room, where soldiers smoke and play at cards. The Room of the Holy Angels contains a sterilizer. Through the corridors that once re-echoed to the soft padding of their felt shoes brisk English nurses pass with a rustle of skirts.

Even the cross by which they lived has turned red, the color of blood.

I saw a typhoid hospital in charge of two women doctors. It was undermanned. There were not enough nurses, not enough orderlies.

One of the women physicians had served through the Balkan war.

"There was typhoid there," she said, "but nothing to compare with this in malignancy. Nearly all the cases have come from one part of Belgium."

Some of the men were wounded, in addition to the fever. She told me that it was impossible to keep things in proper order with the help they had.

"And food!" she said. "We cannot have eggs. They are prohibitive at twenty-five centimes—five cents—each; nor many broths. Meat is dear and scarce, and there are no chickens. We give them stewed macaroni and farinaceous things. It's a terrible problem."

Impure Water a Dangerous Enemy

THE charts bore out what she had said about the type of the disease. They showed incredible temperatures, with the sudden drop that is perforation or hemorrhage.

The odor was heavy. Men lay there, far from home, babbling in delirium or, with fixed eyes, picking at the bed clothes. One was going to die that day. Others would last hardly longer.

"They are all Belgians here," she said. "The British and French troops have been inoculated against typhoid."

So here again the Belgians were playing a losing game. Perhaps they are being inoculated now. I do not know. To inoculate an army means much money, and where is the Belgian Government to get it? It seems the tragic irony of fate that that heroic little army should have been stationed in the infested territory. Are there any blows left to rain on Belgium?

In a letter from the Belgian lines that I have just received the writer says:

"This is just a race for life. The point is, which will get there first, disease and sickness caused by drinking water unspeakably contaminated, or sterilizing plants to avoid such a disaster."

Another letter from a different writer, also in Belgium at the front, says:

"A friend of mine has just been invalided home with enteritis. He had been drinking from a well with a dead Frenchman in it!"

The Belgian Soldiers' Fund has sent out an appeal, which says:

"The full heat of summer will soon be upon the army, and the dust of the battlefield will cause the men to suffer from an intolerable thirst."

This is a part of the appeal:

"It is said that out of the 27,000 men who gave their lives in the South African war 7000 only were killed, whilst 20,000 died of enteritis, contracted by drinking impure water.

"In order to save their army from the fatal effects of contaminated water, the Belgian Army medical authorities

(Continued on Page 44)

The Only Lenses in the Black Picture of War is the Scarlet of the Red Cross

The Sorrow of Blindness is the Portion of Many

THE VELVET BLACK

By Richard Washburn Child

ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE WRIGHT

SHE awoke!

The awakening came from the presence of something external. It had taken sleep away from her with a jerk!

Before her wide eyes there was only a velvet black.

This darkness was bottomless, soft, finely powdered and noiseless. She leaned on one elbow, staring vainly, as one buried in soot or in the center of a universe of lightless nothing.

Heavy curtains hung at the windows; no light came in. The night outside was black, and, like the dark, it yielded no sound; night and dark were noiseless as death. Her eyes, aching with their empty stare, had turned the task of fright over to her ears; and her ears, taking up the labors of terror, listened to a void.

Indeed, there was nothing but the velvet black—a black nothing to the eyes; a black nothing to the ears. Sitting up in the bed, she moved her hand out through this wilderness of dark. It was nothing to the touch; the fingers came back with no experience. She felt that she was not alone in the great square of sooty silence; but she could see nothing, hear nothing, touch nothing. The terror that crept about within her, spreading its icy tentacles along her nerves, had not infected her through any of the known senses.

Still motionless, she felt the fourth sense awaken slowly. Her first realization of this came when she felt the tension of her nostrils. Smell had joined its allies; it was alive to impressions that might come from the velvet black. To it the other senses yielded their task; they ceased their labors; they gave up their claims on her attention, as though to leave the new sense the complete burden of carrying on the investigation.

Pouring into her distended nostrils now, thick as paint, came the telltale odor. The room was filled with the dark silence, but it was also filled with the noxious smell of alcoholic liquor, mingling with the odor of tobacco left on human lips and tongue long after the smoke has gone. In this scent there was the complete proof of the presence that until then she had recognized through an unknown sense.

A man was in the room. She knew he was not connected with her life or her household! He was a stranger, standing somewhere there as one who, standing in a liquid, displaces so many square feet of velvet black.

She allowed herself the thought that the man had gone; that she had been awakened when he had closed the door; that she was now alone in the great square room in the middle of this cube of soot which hid the canopy of the bed above her, the Louis XIV couch beneath the windows, the boudoir table on which the sunlight of the morning had so often fallen dazzlingly—all the familiar furnishings, with their contours and their colors, and even her own white arm, held out against an unknown menace. It was her ears straining again for the sound of this menace that at last, out of the pulsing blackness, caught up another rhythm—the noise of the rising and falling, the inhaling and the exhaling, of a suppressed and labored breath.

A man was there!

She did not move, nor did she speak. She listened to this faint human breathing, trying to locate the spot in the darkness occupied by the intruder; but this was impossible, for now it seemed that the breathing might be the breath of the velvet black itself.

After a time the sound moved a little to the right, then farther to the right. No noise of footfalls came; she not only knew that the man moved cautiously, in stockings, but she had also a final assurance that he was a skulking danger who had entered the one door leading from her writing room to her bedchamber and had closed it behind him.

The night, the house, the velvet black, were noiseless. Thus she was able to hear the finger nails of the other lightly tick the wainscoting as he reached the wall. His hand, feeling along the paper above, produced a faint scratching, suggestive of a calloused palm searching its way. When it came in contact with the electric switch on the wall she held her breath as she listened to the sound of this adventure of the intruder's coarse fingers; but the man, not wishing to dash an avalanche of light into the room, moved on. Having reached the corner, he turned and came back, always feeling his way, touching the paper and the wood. He was nothing more than an odor and a faint, almost imperceptible noise; and yet, to her, he was real—a coarse brutal-faced creature, searching for something.

"I Had the Servants Checked Up Before I Come In"

He had come so near now that she could hear again the throaty rasp of his breath rising from the bottomless dark. She believed he was seeking the door through which he came; that, turned round in the confusion of the velvet black and the muddle of liquor in his brain, he had found the wrong wall.

She had screams lying in her throat like cartridges in a repeating rifle, but her motor centers would not pull the trigger of the nerves which would send them tearing holes into the stillness. She could not even force herself to think clearly; and thus, instinct and judgment standing still, she waited for the man to come near her.

It was her forehead he touched first; then, after a shiver of his own surprise, he moved his rough, cup-shaped palm down over her face, as a horse dealer, with hand half-closed, smooths intelligently the contour of an animal's nose.

"It's a girl!" he said in a thick whisper. "Don't make a sound! I'd kill you! A girl! And all alone."

"I'm not alone," she answered craftily, astonishing her own ears as she spoke. "My husband is sleeping here beside me. Do you understand? Go out, or I will wake him! Under his pillow he's got a revolver."

The hand that had touched her face slid down, with a catlike motion, to her wrist; and there it paused, clutching the bones until the fingers were numb. She had one idea then, as she stared up into the sightless space before her: It was to escape the terrible strength that bruised her flesh, to drive it away from her, to be rid of the menace of unseen eyes whose look she could feel coming down through the black dust of the impenetrable dark. She twisted her body convulsively away from him, and tried to pound at the pillows, the sheet, the twisted folds of blanket beside her.

He released her wrist at once and sprang back through the layers of velvet black, cursing from the back of his dry throat so that the oaths were unintelligible.

"Edward! Edward!" she cried out as she clawed at the tumbled blankets with her fingers. "Edward! Edward! Edward!"

Her voice seemed to be stifled, as if the dust of the dark had filled her throat. Though desperate in its tone, there was a suppression about it, as if the velvet black had walled it in. It was a diminished cry of terror, which might have come from a disk record of a tragedy. And it went on; twice more it called:

"Edward! Edward!"

The last syllable was drowned by a flash of flame. It was a red-and-silver spitting streak, which ripped through the velvet black, leaving no trail behind—just as the point of a sharp knife might cut through black jelly. It disclosed no detail of the room; it cut a terrible gash, which healed with terrible quickness.

The shot gave no shock to the ear, however. The dark quivered with it as jelly might quiver; but the cube of still sooty nothingness which fitted snugly within the four walls choked the crash of the revolver. It made a dull noise like that of a heavy stone dropped into bog mud; the rhythmic silence that followed it was more awful than the explosion itself.

The girl felt a curious numbness in the arm she had reached out to give the alarm. She stretched forward a little and found that beneath her palm, alive with nerves, a warm wetness was spreading out on the cool linen sheet. She was dizzy. The pungent smoke that had filled the room had wiped out for the moment the smell the intruder had brought; with this new chemical odor in her nostrils, she drew her nerves together and listened.

The other was listening too; she could hear nothing but his labored breathing, and it was evident that he waited to see what effect his weapon had taken. There was no sound. The night, the house and the velvet dark were still.

Satisfied with the long pause and the quiet, the man at last took a long, raucous breath; and, with more freedom of movement than he had shown, she could hear him creep toward the foot of her bed and feel his way along the baseboard. Then, reaching out, he touched the blankets beside her, groping about with his fingers along the folds and again exhaling over her the noxious odors that she had sensed before. More dizzy than ever, she fell back on the pillow, staring up at the sightless black and listening in vain for human steps in the laboratory overhead.

Suddenly the bed moved under the weight of the intruder. He had seated himself on the other side of it and he laughed softly—an animal laugh.

"I'll hand it to you, kid," he growled good-naturedly. "You had me fooled. I thought your husband was here, all right!"

She did not answer; her dry lips were pressed together and she was still staring at the wall of black before her eyes, as though hoping some magic would write her on it a message telling her what to do in letters of staring white.

"A man that takes the stuff when there's a job to do is some fool," he went on, as though now he knew that time was his and he could afford the luxury of hearing his own thick, mumbling words. "What do you think of me losin' my way to the door in a room that's only got one and is two stories to the street? And shootin' like that—eh? A green hand is the word—rough work. It ain't like me. It's the stuff I drank."

She said nothing.

"Well, there's my luck, old girl," he went on. "The shot was bad business. If he was here it might have meant a lifer or worse fer me. What? And if he wasn't, why, there was the noise. You had me going with your talk of his having a revolver—see? And there's my luck. Nobody home! I had the servants checked up before I come in; but after I began to work I see there was a light upstairs. I knew it must be a lamp, because I short-circuited the house-lighting with my knife blade—see? I thought it might be him and I'd have to do a quiet job. Then I stumbles in here. And now it's just you and me—see? Nobody home."

The night, the house and the velvet black were silent as death. The girl sprang forward, trying to leave the bed. When her body had risen half upright it encountered in the darkness a hand and forearm which threw her back again violently against the pillows. Somewhere in the contact the unseen hand brushed her arm. The wetness it gathered there he rubbed off with the sound of his palm against the cloth on his knee.

"The bullet nicked you?" he said thickly. "All right—that's up to you. We'll talk about that later. We'll look at it in the light. There's time. Nobody home!"

"There is somebody home," she said. "He's in the room above this. He's working in his laboratory. That's where I left him when I came to bed. And he does have a revolver. He's up there now."

The pulsing silence seemed to answer her, but the man thought it necessary to add his own comment.

"Why don't you scream?" he asked mockingly. "If you thought he was up there and hadn't heard the bark of my persuader, why haven't you hollered your head off?"

His sneering voice came through the velvet black with some new quality of terror in it. Before, he had been cautious, frightened, on the defensive. The situation now had changed. She felt that she must test his confidence.

"What would you do if I screamed?" she asked. "Would you kill me? What would you do?"

"Nothin'," answered the other with a laugh.

She had discovered the truth; he was sure of his ground.

"I wouldn't do nothin', I tell yer," he went on—"until I got sick of hearin' you; and then ——"

She tried to see him through the fine-powdered blackness; but he was now, for the moment, only a voice, a weight on the far edge of the mattress, and an odor. Now, at last, she knew that it would probably be his wit against hers. She knew she must drive him out before the other returned. This man, not two feet away, had already wounded her and yet could laugh about it. He was the killing kind. She wondered whether he would kill a woman.

"Go out of here and I won't make a noise," said she, trying to hold her body against the convulsions of fear that swept over it. "You are right. You have been drinking too much to take these risks. Have sense enough to go now—before I call for help."

"I haven't had enough so I can't shoot straight," boasted the other. "And I didn't come here to go away without takin' nothin'. There ain't any risk. There's nobody home, I tell you."

"Why don't you go?" she wailed in a sudden overwhelming hysteria.

"I gotta lock you up somewhere while I'm busy—while I finish the job. Keep still now and let me think. You're a game kid, all right. I like you. Be nice! Be ——"

"You've had your opportunity," she replied, interrupting him. "You've thrown it away. Now I shall call for help."

"I wonder whether you'd take a chance like that with me?" said the voice, harsh and threatening.

Her answer to this question was one prolonged and piercing scream. Every nerve in her body, leaping with desperation and fear, at the breaking point of a strain for control and strategy, seemed now to share, with savage delight, careless of consequence, prodigal of risk, in that penetrating, terror-proclaiming scream which issued from vocal cords stretched out to produce it. It rose from a little note of a razor edge, cutting through the velvet black and the silence, to a shriek that seemed capable of splitting a crack in the wall to gain its freedom to the outer world. The room, the sooty darkness, could not contain it. It loosed into the void of sight a sound which seemed to fill that void—which seemed to create a universe of its own.

The last of it was choked back into her mouth by the rough hand which came out of the velvet dark, unseen, and drew the corners together in its fierce grip.

"Don't do that!" said unseen lips near her ear. The quality of the voice had changed—and the scream had sobered him. "I want to get out of here without hurting anybody," he growled. "Don't be a fool! If you was a man I'd kill you. I'd have to kill you!"

Behind the painful grasp of the hand, which squeezed her lips out of shape, she shook her head, nodding violently her assent. The hand was withdrawn.

"I've got enough," said the voice. "I was swimmin' with the liquor. I haven't been out six months yet and I don't want any mess. Get me out of this."

"Yes," she said. "I know the way. I'll take you to the door. There's a room beyond. You came through it. It leads to the hall."

She stopped suddenly; and the moment her voice ceased the rhythm of the silence came on again, beating in their ears like a heart. And then followed another sound!

"Listen!" said the man from across the dark.

Into the stillness of the night, the house and the velvet black came, from above, the sound of running feet. The man on the bed jumped up with the agility of an animal.

"He was there!" he exclaimed in a harsh whisper. "Do you get it? He missed the shot, but he heard you yell. You're responsible for this!"

The feet above stopped somewhere before they reached the stairs.

"Tryin' to turn on the lights," whispered the man. "Lucky for him he can't. He'd make a nice target in the doorway—eh? But it's you that killed him. Don't forget that. It's up to you."

He was coming round the bed again. He felt along until he had her wrist once more in the grip of his left hand.

"He has a gun, you said," the voice went on accusingly. "It was you who told me that. It's a case of him or me—see? There ain't any way for me to get out now. Listen! He's on the stairs. I'll get him when the door opens."

She gulped, pressing her free hand against her throat as though to squeeze words out of its dry passages.

"For —— Don't kill him!" she begged piteously. "I'll do anything! I'll keep quiet. I won't struggle. I'll think of something. I'll get him away. I'll call to him and tell him not to come in."

From beyond the universe of stifling dark came the sound of a crash; after a pause came another, and the squeak and ripping of wood.

"It's the chair I put under the doorknob in the next room. He's broken its back," the man said. "What chance of your keeping him out of here? There ain't any! I gotta rub him out."

Within two feet of her face sounded the click of a revolver hammer.

"O God!" she whispered.

She could hear the sound of the hand beyond the door searching for the knob; searching for an entrance searching for death.

"My voice will stop him," she whispered. "He will stop at the door. I will hold him there. I'll talk to him. It will save you from being a murderer. I'll make him go away."

For a flash of a second there was again only the universe of silence and the velvety black. The man outside, confused by the dark, sensing perhaps danger, had called out hoarsely, "Edith! Edith!" and was listening for an answer. The man who held her wrist bent over so that his face, unseen, was close to hers.

"If I hear him move away from that door I've got to shoot!" he whispered. "I'd lose him if he moved."

She understood what he meant; if the other man left the spot where he had entered he would become a mere presence somewhere in the velvet black. All the advantage held by the creature who was standing beside her bed would be lost.

"And one word telling him I'm here means I'd drop him."

She nodded, as though he could see her through the smothering darkness; and she felt the hand on her wrist relax and steal away beyond the edge of the bed.

"And if he lights a match too!"

"Edith! Edith! Edith!" came the muffled, anxious voice, cutting into the soot; and then, as the doorknob turned, and the crack widened, the voice also opened into a full sound. "What's the matter?"

"Don't move!" Her own words were sharp, brittle, icy. "If you love me, don't move!" she went on to the man who had stepped into the room. "I am in bed here. I am all right now. I had a nightmare. Something has happened to the lights and I was frightened. I couldn't find the door. But you are in it now. Just keep speaking and I will come to you. I want to go up with you to your laboratory, dear."

"Stop!"

"Why? There's nothing wrong."

She knew the revolver, somewhere in the swaying sea of velvet black, was fixed on the spot where the little noises of the newcomer's feet on the sill suggested the hesitation in his mind.

"Don't move!" she exclaimed. "I'm terribly upset. Don't move! I'll come to you."

He did not reply at once; and so the deathlike silence saturated the thick fabric of the dark. When he spoke once more his tone had changed—a note of suspicion was in it.

"I thought I heard a shot," he said. "I was reading and almost dozed off. I didn't believe my ears. It was just a faint sound."

"Oh, there was no shot," said she gayly, putting her feet out of bed. "Stay there, dear—in the doorway."

"The lights will not work," he replied. "I had to use matches to find my way round. I'll light the last."

"No!" she screamed at him. "No! No! My nerves! My nerves! Whatever you do, don't strike a light. Oh, please listen to me, dear—just for once, let me have my way."

She knew that somewhere in the velvet black the muzzle of a death weapon stared at the strip of dark in which he stood, as an evil eye might stare.

"I thought I heard a shot," he reiterated. "There's something wrong here."

No answer came from her for a moment; for, hearing the faint click of a revolver trigger, she could neither draw in nor exhale the breath of her body. Nerves drew her fingers into curves, which clawed at the dark like the talons of a blind bird seeking to tear its enemy. Her eardrums grew tight, waiting for the crash of the shot. But it did not come.

She did not dare to move from the bed; instinct told her that any noise in that roomful of powdery soot—any noise that could not be understood at once—might send a bullet stabbing through the velvet black into soft flesh. Back to her came the thought that the intruder had stated the truth; she would have given her life to have that terrible scream back in her throat, unloosed.

"If you love me don't move!" she whispered at the darkness. "Go upstairs to your laboratory. I'll come right there."

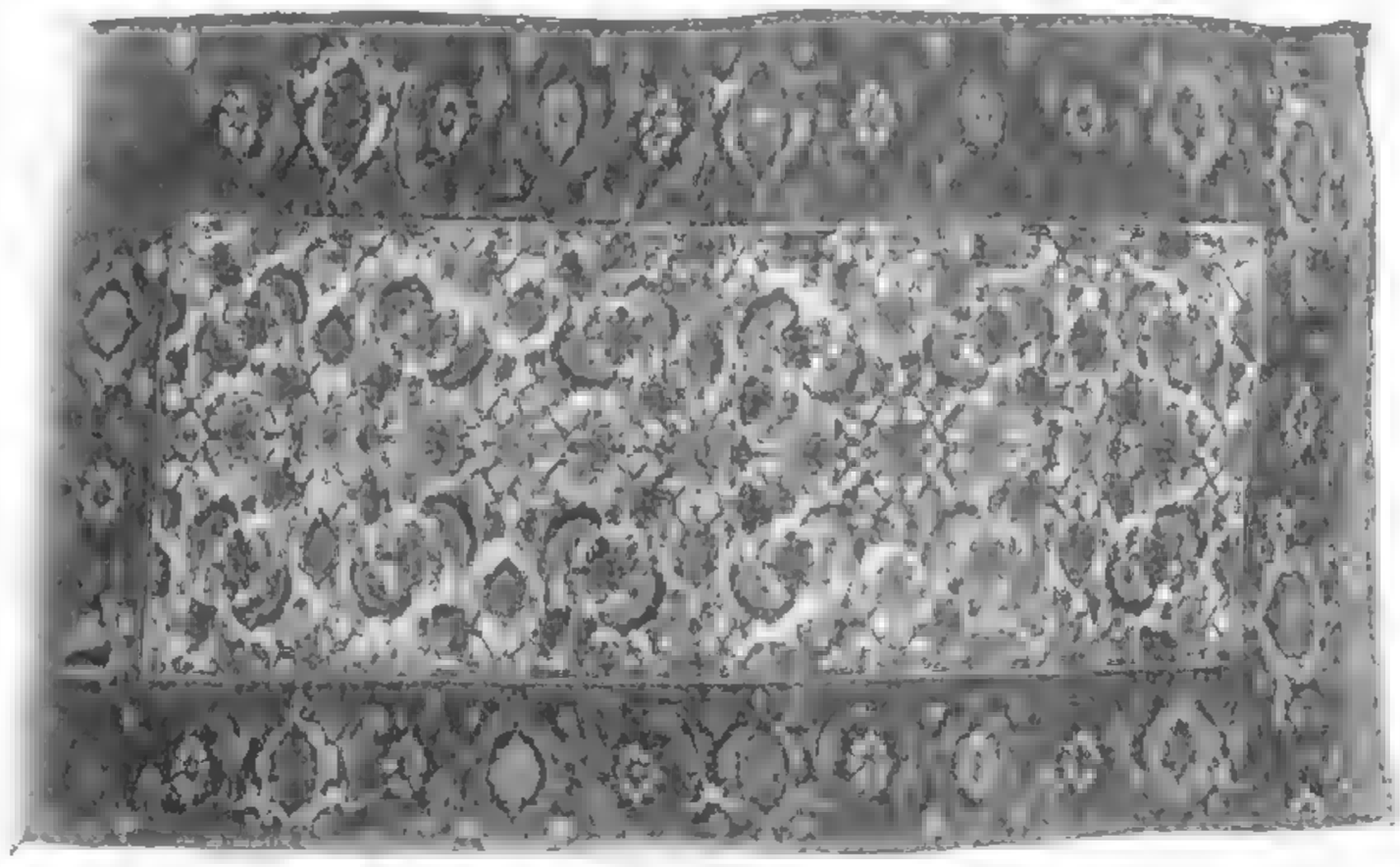
He did not answer. She heard his sleeve as his hand dropped to his side, and then the hard tick of metal against wood as something he held knocked against the half-closed door. This was the revolver. He had come armed; he had sensed the desperation in her cry. And now, not only she but the other man, who lurked beyond the wall of black somewhere in the spacious room, knew that he, too, had a ready weapon.

(Continued on Page 38)

To Her This Flare of a Match Was the Most Significant Spot in the Universe

Getting Wise in the Rug Business

By THOMAS JAMES DONLON



Bijar Kurd Rug

IN 1876 Robert Levy, a Turkish Jew, conceived the idea of bringing to America a collection of rugs. He also brought with him a native of Constantinople who had acted as guide to Mark Twain and who was known as "Faraway Moses." Thus he had been dubbed by the humorist, who always found himself left so far behind by his eager guide that he was compelled perpetually to shout after him, "Don't go so far away, Moses!" in order to keep him somewhere within hailing distance. He put Moses in his book, which had a great vogue at that time, and made him famous.

Levy located on Broadway and widely advertised the presence of the notorious cicerone of the famous humorist. Crowds flocked to the store to see Faraway Moses, and the beauty, durability and value of the Oriental rug were thus brought to the notice of the American public. Levy reaped a rich harvest in America, and presently a New York firm bought him out and incorporated an Oriental rug department, with the enterprising Turkish Jew as manager. This was the first rug department ever known in America. Faraway Moses—his usefulness passed—was shipped back to the city of dogs.

The number of Oriental rugs imported, previous to the advent of Levy, was negligible, consisting solely of the few brought back by travelers. Even in 1883, seven years after the coming of Levy, there were only four men regularly traveling to Constantinople in quest of rugs. To-day there are more like two hundred buyers, from all parts of the United States, regularly visiting the Constantinople rug market.

In olden times, when the Oriental had nothing else to do—which was generally the case—he made rugs. Rug making was a passion, almost a religion, with him. He expressed his poetic soul in colors and designs. He selected the very finest wool and used vegetable colors that never could fade. Originally he used to do his weaving on four sticks, set crosswise to accommodate the web and the woof. So the rugs accumulated for generations, like antique furniture. In fact, rugs were about the only furniture of the day. No family, however poor, was without an abundance of rugs for floor coverings, couch coverings and hangings.

The names of Oriental rugs were generally derived from the village, town or district from which they came. The rugs themselves were peculiarly individual, the makers often being confined, through environment and tradition, to a certain weave, design and quality. For instance, the Persian rug, which attained its height, so to speak, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, ran to wonderful reproductions of lotus flowers and palmettos with arabesque scrolls, whereas the Caucasian and other rugs, coming from wilder districts, were more primitive in their nature, as is evidenced by the geometric designs and the reproduction of color in its intensity rather than in its more delicate tones.

A Time When There Were No Poor Rugs

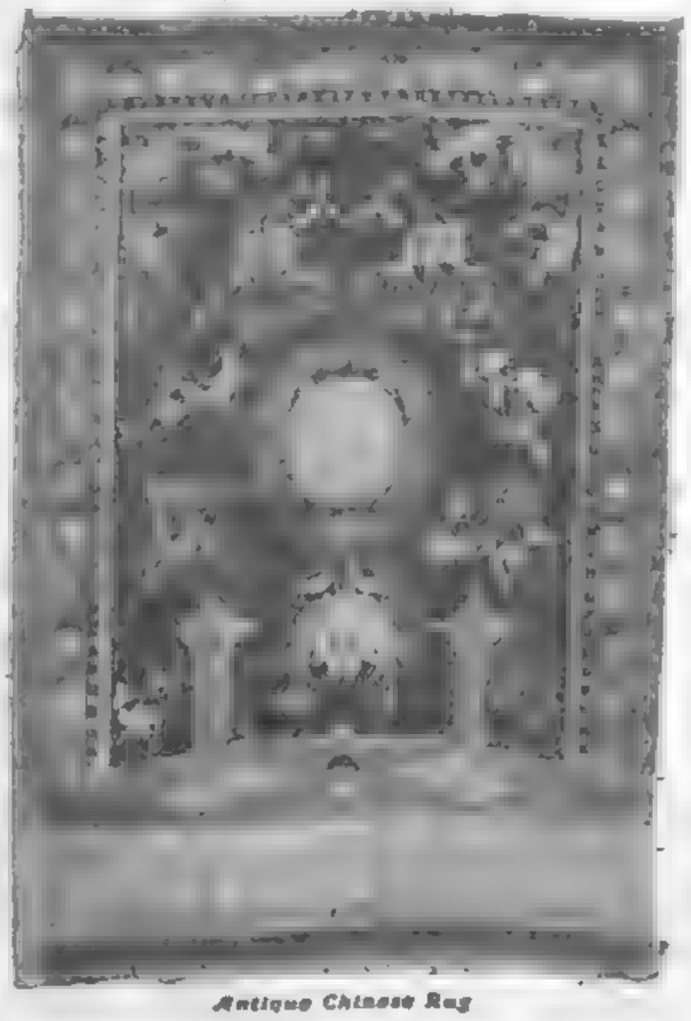
THE perception of color that these weavers so often embodied in ordinary, coarse weaves has always been a source of wonder to me. This is especially true of some of the blues and yellows of the marvelous old Kurds. The most famous of the Oriental rugs, to the lay mind, is the Ispahan—a name given to rugs of a soft, red background, made in the village of Herat-i in Persia, and ascribed to the early seventeenth century by authorities at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and Doctor Bode of the German Government. The wonderful so-called Polonaise rugs, of which there are probably four hundred in existence—some fifty of them in the possession of Baron Rothschild are directly attributable to the imperial looms of Persia in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and owe their name to the fact that they were made mostly to order for Poland.

As a consequence of centuries of artistic activity on the part of its rug makers, the East, when America began to make inroads upon its supply, was literally teeming with rugs, which could be got for practically nothing. There was hardly a poor rug in existence at this period, since, time being of no consequence and gain having no place in the maker's mind, the whole impulse of the weaver was a good one. The rug up to this period had been made only for the use of the family, or as a gift to a friend, or for some potentate in the district. The number made for the European market, under supervision, or with design furnished, was negligible. And then began the commercialization of the East so deplored by the late Charles Eliot Norton, lecturer on fine arts at Harvard, who once wrote to me that "the influence of the West, in its present mood, upon the East is a white calamity more to be dreaded than any possible yellow peril."

I cannot recall, in the light of my present knowledge, that even in 1893 there were any really poorly colored or poorly woven rugs. The value of a rug lies in its color, and beautiful color is found only where good workmanship exists—the wools must have been carefully selected and the dyes must be purely vegetable. There is nothing quite like the wonderful color of well-selected and well-dyed wools which have been subjected to Oriental usage and to the mellowing influence of say half a century, for it takes that time at least properly to tone a rug. It was not until about 1900 that the washing or doctoring process prevailed. The enormous capacity of America swept the East bare of its rugs. Factories sprang up all over the land. Rugs were made under commercial conditions that killed the art hitherto produced by human hands. Designs were furnished, qualities and sizes were prescribed, and aniline was used instead of the time-defying vegetable dyes. A rug made under such modern conditions with the commercial spirit alone animating the weaver and with German aniline dyes at hand resulted in a fabric that was both new and crude.

How to make these raw colors salable—in other words, how to render a fabric so carelessly made soft and antique looking—became the problem, and the solution of it was found in the process of rug washing. This process consists in giving the rug a bath in acid solution to tone down the color, and results in destroying the oil or life of the wool and causing the rug to rot. One can easily detect a washed rug by bending back the pile and looking at the wool close to the warp, where the colors in their original state—or at least much stronger than they are on the surface—will be seen. Besides there isn't the beautiful "feel" to a washed rug that there is to a genuine old piece.

To me the great crime of this process is the disregard of the fundamental principle of art laid down by Ruskin, "that nothing can be beautiful which first is not true." Truth must mark all stages of a thing of beauty. Time alone can give the blending and mellowing influence that is the charm of the antique.



Antique Chinese Rug

The Oriental Way of Doing Business

THE Marquand sale at the American Art Galleries in New York, in 1903, marked the beginning of high prices for choice Oriental rugs. At this sale Vital Benguiat, a famous collector, paid $38,500 for a fifteenth-century Persian rug, twelve by six. I understood from the dealer who sold the piece to Mr. Marquand in 1893 for $4000 that he had bought it the previous year in Constantinople for $1500. The rug disappeared into Mr. Benguiat's collection, that gentleman subsequently refusing at least two offers for it of $100,000 each.

The news of the price brought at the Marquand sale was flashed all over the world, with the result that rugs took a jump in value and have not yet ceased jumping. Art lovers here began to awaken to the value rugs were attaining, and a new impetus to the acquisition of fine pieces began. In the sixteenth century the churches of Spain, in particular, were filled with Ispahan rugs made in Persia and India for use in these churches. These pieces—picked up for a song in the eighties and held for two decades—proved a veritable gold mine for the dealers who eventually sold them.

Probably the most famous collection of rugs in New York was disposed of through a private exhibition at one of the big art galleries, when something like twenty-one pieces were sold in the first lot for $350,000, and ten or twelve in the second lot for $300,000. That was in 1905, and the fabulous prices brought were directly attributable to the figure paid by Benguiat at the Marquand sale.

The largest individual collection, probably, of authentic fifteenth and sixteenth century rugs in America is owned by ex-Senator W. A. Clark. I understand that he paid for one piece $125,000. This selfsame rug was picked up in Spain in the early eighties for about $300, but it would be impossible to find another like it for any number of hundreds of thousands of dollars. Senator Clark's collection, I figure, consists of about fifty pieces and cost him something over $1,000,000.

P. A. B. Widener, of Philadelphia, also has a very important collection of the early weaves; but the largest and most comprehensive collection in America, representing all periods, weaves and kinds, is that of James F. Ballard, of St. Louis.

Where there is ignorance on the part of the buyer, there is very apt to be deception on the part of the seller. This brings us to some of the fake methods used in selling rugs and other art objects, but before enumerating any of them I should like to explain the attitude of the Oriental. He has come to our shores in great numbers, through the

advent of the rug, and has brought with him the training of centuries in methods of buying and selling that are antipodal to ours. Somewhere Kipling says: "Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet." My experience, covering twenty-one years in dealings with the Oriental, confirms Kipling's saying.

Our way of doing business is absolutely foreign to the Oriental. With him a transaction means a battle of wits between buyer and seller. The seller endeavors to get as much as possible, and the buyer tries to give up as little as possible. Consequently, one Oriental asks a price far in excess of what he expects to get, and the other offers half what he is willing to give. The minutes, hours, days or weeks used to consummate a deal, according to the amount involved, are full of protestations of eternal friendship, sacrifice, congratulations and other general bowing and scraping felicitations. For instance:

A goes into the shop of B. "How much do you want for that?" he asks, indicating a certain rug.

"I want, from you, my dear friend, $10,000."

"I wish that I had the $10,000 to give you. Never for a moment would I hesitate. It is worth it, every penny, but alas and alack, I haven't the $10,000."

"From you, my dear friend," B protests, "I would be strongly inclined to take less. What is the most that you could really afford to pay?"

"The amount that I could afford to pay, my dear B, is so much less than you're asking that I hardly have the face to mention it to you. My best price would be $2500."

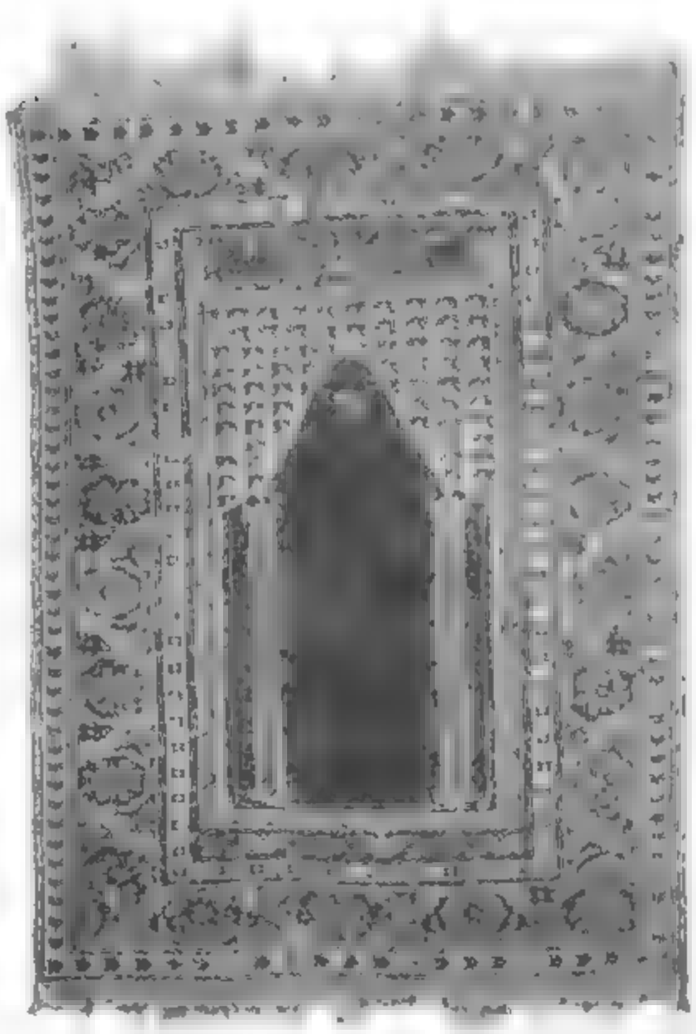
"Ridiculous! Absurd!" B rejoins. "I couldn't accept such a price, but seeing it is you I might be inclined to take $7500."

A leaves the shop and does not appear for days, simulating indifference, and B—also a good actor—affects not to see A should he chance to pass the shop. Presently A comes back and says that, owing to a recent legacy, he would be willing to pay $3500. B, having a big bill to meet, will be strongly inclined to take $6500. And so it goes on, until finally the beard is pulled and hands are shaken over the sum of $5000—both buyer and seller being satisfied and happy.

Genuine Antiques Made to Order

IMAGINE what a field America offered to one of Oriental tendencies, with the prospective buyer profoundly ignorant both of the article he wished to purchase and of the bargaining methods of the East! It must have amazed the Oriental, pursuing here the methods of barter that had prevailed in his country for centuries, to be given, in the space of a second, at least double what he had expected for his rug. At first the Eastern rug merchant found that he could take advantage of the American buyer without any trouble. The merchant asked an enormous price and got it without any dickering; but as soon as the American began to get wise to such ways the dealer had to adopt less raw methods of gouging the public.

The case of a rich woman who attended a sale of rare rugs some years ago is one instance of a deliberate attempt to swindle. She was about to pay $60,000 for a piece when another dealer—from no other motive than fierce jealousy—betrayed to her the fact that the same rug had been offered



Ghiordies Rug

to him for $15,000. Whereupon the woman offered $15,000 for the piece, and the owner, needing money badly, sacrificed his property. But what must she have thought of rug men and their profits!

One can hardly pay too much for an article that is genuinely rare and unduplicatable. The crime consists in making two, three or four thousand per cent profit upon an article that contains no art value, that is not rare, and that can be duplicated within the space of a year or so.

The average American millionaire has been engaged all his life in concentration on oil, tobacco, steel or some other commodity. He has taken no time from his pursuit of the dollar for the cultivation of an appreciation of art—he has not developed his art sense. His desire to splurge, or his quest for new sensations, or his plans for a magnificent home in New York have driven him to buy the best on the market. But his idea of the best very frequently has been governed by the price asked and not by the art-quality of the article offered.

In 1904 I met a Fifth Avenue millionaire who was in quest of sixteenth-century rugs. I directed him to one of the few dealers in such rugs, who has since sold to this man goods to the value of some half million dollars, on what the millionaire fondly believes to be a ten per cent arrangement above cost. The method of deluding him is very crude: The dealer quotes to the buyer double what he proposes that the buyer shall pay. Whereupon the buyer takes the desired article to the bookkeeper, who quotes—as the cost price of the dealer—a figure just half of what has been named to the buyer as the retail price. The bookkeeper's figure is in reality the full retail price. Then the buyer, satisfied that he is making a great bargain, sends his check for the amount quoted by the bookkeeper plus ten per cent. Thus he, an old customer, is bilked to the tune of ten per cent over and above what any ordinary passer-by would have had to pay for the same article.

One time, however, our millionaire nearly succeeded in getting a rug at the actual cost plus the ten per cent that his agreement called for. This was when his dealer bought a rug at the Yerkes sale in 1911 for $9500. Here the millionaire was able to find out the actual cost of the rug to the dealer, and he directed that it be sent to his house. For nearly a month the dealer and his assistants cudgeled their brains to find some way in which to make more than their ten per cent, and finally it occurred to them to introduce into the transaction a mythical partner, or half owner of the rug, who insisted upon $2500 as his share of the profit. This worked like a charm. In addition to ten per cent on the auction price, the buyer paid a bonus of $2500 to the mythical partner.

Many winter resorts are infested with rug fakers. One of my customers not long ago asked me to look at two silk rugs that he had bought at a great Florida watering place. He had taken them, he said, simply to help out an Oriental who had not been able to pay his room rent. The discount that the Eastern gentleman had taken off the first price that he had asked for the rug was almost startling, and it had seemed to our millionaire friend a pity to take the poor devil's goods at such a figure. But as a matter of fact, what he did pay was far in excess of the intrinsic value of the goods—worthy only of a legitimate commercial profit.

There was no doubt that the word silk had the hypnotic effect that the Oriental sought to produce on his brother of the Western world, and well does the Easterner know that an undeveloped taste in color is apt to be caught by something that shines. This fact helped to bring about the vogue for silk rugs that obtained in America some years ago. The silk rug netted the unscrupulous dealer very handsome returns on his investment. When these cunning fakers indulged in flights of the imagination they obtained some ridiculously high prices for rugs not inherently beautiful. The genuine silk rug of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was made of silk mixed with goat's fleece, which produced a wondrously lustrous fabric. A four-by-seven rug of this kind would be legitimately worth from $3000 to $10,000, according to its beauty.

Like any other vogue, that in silk rugs commercialized and vulgarized the object of its affections. So the cunning people of Constantinople—like the old Chinaman—in order to meet the new demand began to produce "old" silk rugs. They used modern silk with no goat's wool, and even ordinary designs. The popular four-by-seven silk rug that was made and sold in Constantinople, resold to American buyers, and a duty of about fifty per cent paid in addition, was landed here at a cost of from $85 to $125, and in many instances was sold by the voracious dealer to the credulous millionaire for from $2000 to $3000. But if the buyer chanced to be wise as to the character and methods of the Oriental, he could get the same rug for from $300 to $400, since the man from the East has an almost religious aversion to seeing any kind of profit get away from him—once it is in sight.

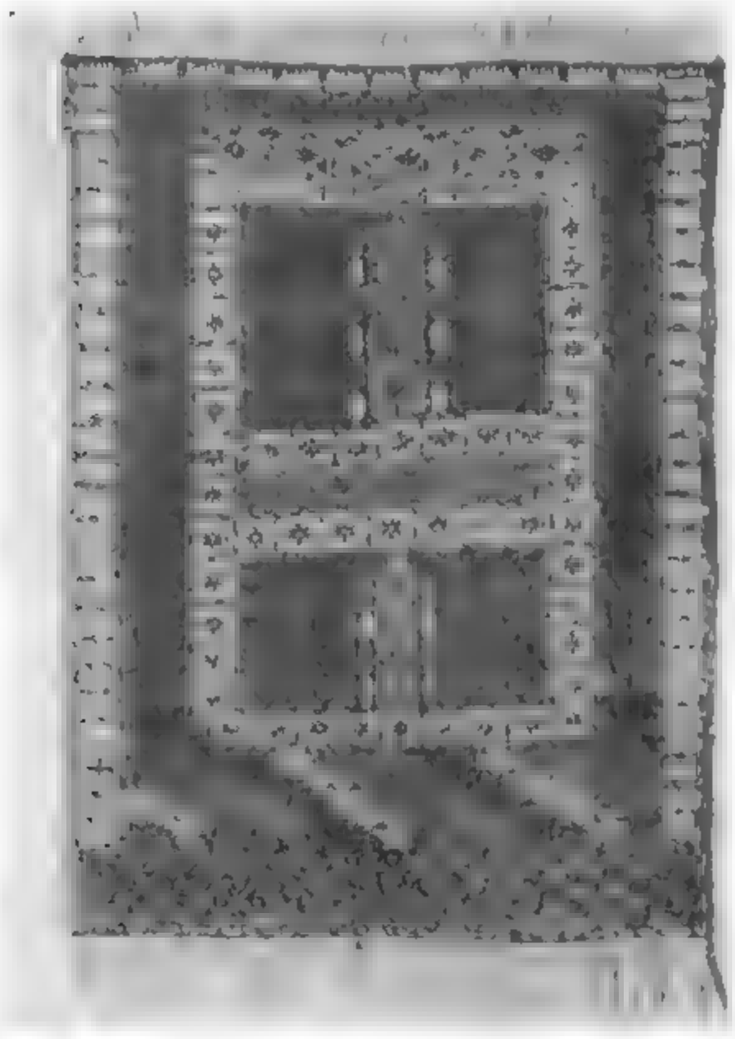
How the Rug Faker Tricks the Amateur

RUG gullibility is not confined to Americans by any manner of means. The foreigner, unless he has imbibed artistic instincts from his surroundings, is quite as apt to fall a prey to the blandishments of the Turk or Persian as is the man from Fifth Avenue or Milwaukee. I have in mind the case of a German who was swindled by a clever rug trick. The rugs that captured the Teutonic eye were five in number and of a size of about nine by twelve. They bore a series of pictures that made a continued story, so to speak. The victim was caught largely by the fanciful tale of the vender. It was alleged that the rugs had belonged to royalty, had graced the palace of some prince in the hill country or somewhere else.

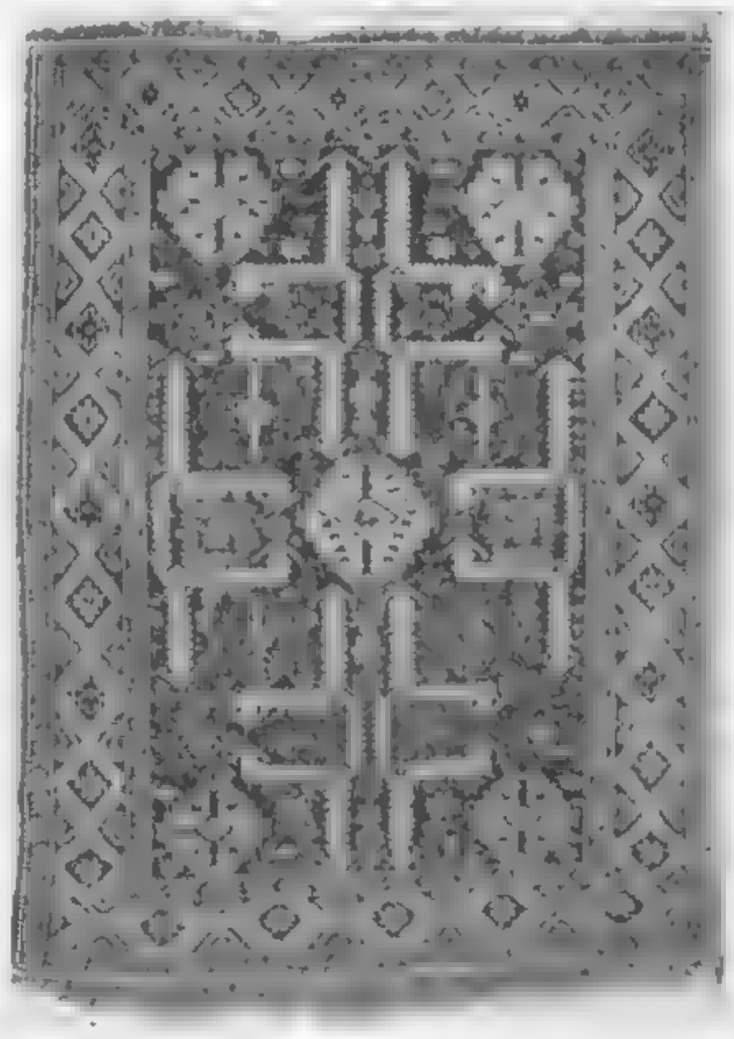
The German paid a fabulous sum for them, but the rugs were nothing more nor less than a plain commercial product, worth about $200 apiece, or $1000 for the lot. Thinking he had something truly wonderful, our German friend brought them to this country and exhibited them. It is alleged that a Western millionaire was on the point of paying $100,000 for the five. The deal fell through and the rugs were then brought to New York, where I chanced to run across them. The mere fact that they depicted gentlemen of the Orient in fez and gorgeous raiment did not deceive me as to their value. I believe the owner of the rugs, heart-broken, not so much by loss of money as by disillusionment, took the tawdry things back to Germany unsold.

Instances are numerous throughout the country where fake dealers have appeared at the homes of wealthy people with wonderful and bizarre things that have captured the

(Continued on Page 32)



Bokhara Prayer Rug



Shiraz Rug

ALIBI IKE

By RING W. LARDNER

ILLUSTRATED BY M. L. BLUMENTHAL

He Was Just as Ig'orant About Poker as Billiards

HIS right name was Frank X. Farrell, and I guess the X stood for "Excuse me." Because he never pulled a play, good or bad, on or off the field, without apologizin' for it.

"Alibi Ike" was the name Carey wished on him the first day he reported down South. O' course we all cut out the "Alibi" part of it right away for the fear he would overhear it and bust somebody. But we called him "Ike" right to his face and the rest of it was understood by everybody on the club except Ike himself.

He ast me one time, he says:

"What do you all call me Ike for? I ain't no Yid."

"Carey give you the name," I says. "It's his nickname for everybody he takes a likin' to."

"He mustn't have only a few friends then," says Ike. "I never heard him say 'Ike' to nobody else."

But I was goin' to tell you about Carey namin' him. We'd been workin' out two weeks and the pitchers was showin' somethin' when this bird joined us. His first day out he stood up there so good and took such a reef at the old pill that he had everyone lookin'. Then him and Carey was together in left field, catchin' fungoes, and it was after we was through for the day that Carey told me about him.

"What do you think of Alibi Ike?" ast Carey.

"Who's that?" I says.

"This here Farrell in the outfield," says Carey.

"He looks like he could hit," I says.

"Yes," says Carey, "but he can't hit near as good as he can apologize."

Then Carey went on to tell me what Ike had been pullin' out there. He'd dropped the first fly ball that was hit to him and told Carey his glove wasn't broke in good yet, and Carey says the glove could easy of been Kid Gleason's gran'father. He made a whale of a catch out o' the next one and Carey says "Nice work!" or somethin' like that, but Ike says he could of caught the ball with his back turned only he slipped when he started after it and, besides that, the air currents fooled him.

"I thought you done well to get to the ball," says Carey.

"I ought to been settin' under it," says Ike.

"What did you hit last year?" Carey ast him.

"I had malaria most o' the season," says Ike. "I wound up with .356."

"Where would I have to go to get malaria?" says Carey, but Ike didn't wise up.

I and Carey and him set at the same table together for supper. It took him half an hour longer'n us to eat because he had to excuse himself every time he lifted his fork.

"Doctor told me I needed starch," he'd say, and then toss a shovelful o' potatoes into him. Or, "They ain't much meat on one o' these chops," he'd tell us, and grab another one. Or he'd say: "Nothin' like onions for a cold," and then he'd dip into the perfumery.

"Better try that apple sauce," says Carey. "It'll help your malaria."

"Whose malaria?" says Ike. He'd forgot already why he didn't only hit .356 last year.

I and Carey begin to lead him on.

"Whereabouts did you say your home was?" I ast him.

"I live with my folks," he says. "We live in Kansas City—not right down in the business part—outside a ways."

"How's that come?" says Carey. "I should think you'd get rooms in the post office."

But Ike was too busy curin' his cold to get that one.

"Are you married?" I ast him.

"No," he says. "I never run round much with girls, except to shows onct in a wile and parties and dances and roller skatin'."

"Never take 'em to the prize fights, eh?" says Carey.

"We don't have no real good bouts," says Ike. "Just bush stuff. And I never figured a boxin' match was a place for the ladies."

Well, after supper he pulled a cigar out and lit it. I was just goin' to ask him what he done it for, but he beat me to it.

"Kind o' rests a man to smoke after a good work-out," he says. "Kind o' settles a man's supper, too."

"Looks like a pretty good cigar," says Carey.

"Yes," says Ike. "A friend o' mine give it to me—a fella in Kansas City that runs a billiard room."

"Do you play billiards?" I ast him.

"I used to play a fair game," he says. "I'm all out o' practice now—can't hardly make a shot."

We coaxed him into a four-handed battle, him and Carey against Jack Mack and I. Say, he couldn't play billiards as good as Willie Hoppe; not quite. But to hear him tell it, he didn't make a good shot all evenin'. I'd leave him an awful-lookin' layout and he'd gather 'em up in one try and then run a couple o' hundred, and between every carom he'd say he'd put too much stuff on the ball, or the English didn't take, or the table wasn't true, or his stick was crooked, or somethin'. And all the time he had the balls actin' like they was Dutch soldiers and him Kaiser William. We started out to play fifty points, but we had to make it a thousand so as I and Jack and Carey could try the table.

The four of us set round the lobby a wile after we was through playin', and when it got along toward bedtime Carey whispered to me and says:

"Ike'd like to go to bed, but he can't think up no excuse."

Carey hadn't hardly finished whisperin' when Ike got up and pulled it.

"Well, good-night, boys," he says. "I ain't sleepy, but I got some gravel in my shoes and it's killin' my feet."

We knowed he hadn't never left the hotel since we'd came in from the grounds and changed our clo'es. So Carey says:

"I should think they'd take them gravel pits out o' the billiard room."

But Ike was already on his way to the elevator, limpin'.

"He's got the world beat," says Carey to Jack and I. "I've knew lots o' guys that had an alibi for every mistake they made; I've heard pitchers say that the ball slipped when somebody cracked one off'n 'em; I've heard infielders complain of a sore arm after heavin' one into the stand, and I've saw outfielders tooken sick with a dizzy spell when they've misjudged a fly ball. But this baby can't even go to bed without apologizin', and I bet he excuses himself to the razor when he gets ready to shave."

"And at that," says Jack, "he's goin' to make us a good man."

"Yes," says Carey, "unless rheumatism keeps his battin' average down to .400."

Well, sir, Ike kept whalin' away at the ball all through the trip till everybody knowed he'd won a job. Cap had him in there regular the last few exhibition games and told the newspaper boys a week before the season opened that he was goin' to start him in Kane's place.

"You're there, kid," says Carey to Ike, the night Cap made the 'nnouncement. "They ain't many boys that wins a big league berth their third year out."

"I'd of been up here a year ago," says Ike, "only I was bent over all season with lumbago."

II

IT RAINED down in Cincinnati one day and somebody organized a little game o' cards. They was shy two men to make six and ast I and Carey to play.

"I'm with you if you get Ike and make it seven-handed," says Carey.

So they got a hold of Ike and we went up to Smitty's room.

"I pretty near forgot how many you deal," says Ike. "It's been a long wile since I played."

I and Carey give each other the wink, and sure enough, he was just as ig'orant about poker as billiards. About the second hand, the pot was opened two or three ahead of him, and they was three in when it come his turn. It cost a buck, and he throwed in two.

He Never Pulled a Play, Good or Bad, On or Off the Field, Without Apologizin' for It

"It's raised, boys," somebody says.

"Gosh, that's right, I did raise it," says Ike.

"Take out a buck if you didn't mean to tilt her," says Carey.

"No," says Ike, "I'll leave it go."

Well, it was raised back at him and then he made another mistake and raised again. They was only three left in when the draw come. Smitty'd opened with a pair o' kings and he didn't help 'em. Ike stood pat. The guy that'd raised him back was flushin' and he didn't fill. So Smitty checked and Ike bet and didn't get no call. He tossed his hand away, but I grabbed it and give it a look. He had king,

queen, jack and two tens. Alibi Ike he must have seen me peekin', for he leaned over and whispered to me.

"I overlooked my hand," he says. "I thought all the wile it was a straight."

"Yes," I says, "that's why you raised twice by mistake."

They was another pot that he come into with tens and fours. It was tilted a couple o' times and two o' the strong fellas drawed ahead of Ike. They each drawed one. So Ike throwed away his little pair and come out with four tens. And they was four treys against him. Carey'd looked at Ike's discards and then he says:

"This lucky bum busted two pair."

"No, no, I didn't," says Ike.

"Yes, yes, you did," says Carey, and showed us the two fours.

"What do you know about that?" says Ike. "I'd of swore one was a five spot."

Well, we hadn't had no pay day yet, and after a wile everybody except Ike was goin' shy. I could see him gettin' restless and I was wonderin' how he'd make the get-away. He tried two or three times. "I got to buy some collars before supper," he says

"No hurry," says Smitty. "The stores here keeps open all night in April."

After a minute he opened up again.

"My uncle out in Nebraska ain't expected to live," he says. "I ought to send a telegram."

"Would that save him?" says Carey.

"No, it sure wouldn't," says Ike, "but I ought to leave my old man know where I'm at."

"When did you hear about your uncle?" says Carey.

"Just this mornin'," says Ike.

"Who told you?" ast Carey.

"I got a wire from my old man," says Ike.

"Well," says Carey, "your old man knows you're still here yet this afternoon if you was here this mornin'. Trains leavin' Cincinnati in the middle o' the day don't carry no ball clubs."

"Yes," says Ike, "that's true. But he don't know where I'm goin' to be next week"

"Ain't he got no schedule?" ast Carey.

"I sent him one openin' day," says Ike, "but it takes mail a long time to get to Idaho."

"I thought your old man lived in Kansas City," says Carey.

"He does when he's home," says Ike.

"But now," says Carey, "I s'pose he's went to Idaho so as he can be near your sick uncle in Nebraska."

"He's visitin' my other uncle in Idaho."

"Then how does he keep posted about your sick uncle?" ast Carey.

"He don't," says Ike. "He don't even know my other uncle's sick. That's why I ought to wire and tell him."

"Good night!" says Carey.

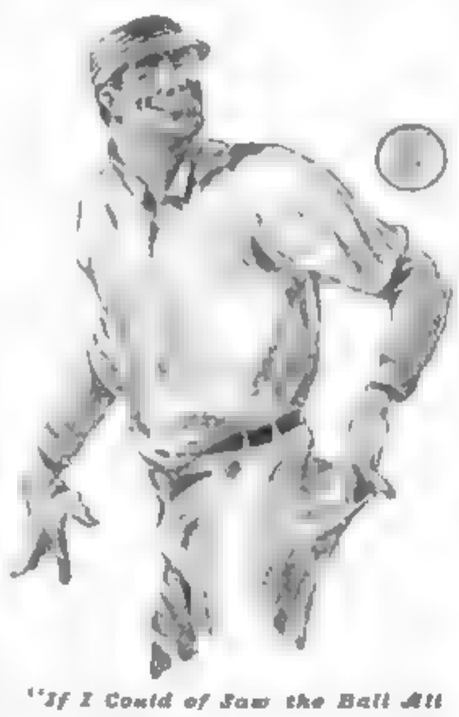
"What town in Idaho is your old man at?" I says.

Ike thought it over.

"No town at all," he says. "But he's near a town."

"Near what town?" I says.

"Yuma," says Ike.



"If I Could of Saw the Ball All the Time I'd of Got It in My Hip Pocket"

Well, by this time he'd lost two or three pots and he was desperate. We was playin' just as fast as we could, because we seen we couldn't hold him much longer. But he was tryin' so hard to frame an escape that he couldn't pay no attention to the cards, and it looked like we'd get his whole pile away from him if we could make him stick.

The telephone saved him. The minute it begun to ring, five of us jumped for it. But Ike was there first.

"Yes," he says, answerin' it. "This is him. I'll come right down"

And he slammed up the receiver and beat it out o' the door without even sayin' good-by.

"Smitty'd ought to locked the door," says Carey.

"What did he win?" ast Carey.

We figured it up sixty-odd bucks.

"And the next time we ask him to play," says Carey, "his fingers will be so stiff he can't hold the cards."

Well, we set round a wile talkin' it over, and pretty soon the telephone rung again. Smitty answered it. It was a friend of his'n from Hamilton and he wanted to know why Smitty didn't hurry down. He was the one that had called before and Ike had told him he was Smitty.

"Ike'd ought to split with Smitty's friend," says Carey.

"No," I says, "he'll need all he won. It costs money to buy collars and to send telegrams from Cincinnati to your old man in Texas and keep him posted on the health o' your uncle in Cedar Rapids, D. C."

III

AND you ought to heard him out there on that field! They wasn't a day when he didn't pull six or seven, and it didn't make no difference whether he was goin' good or bad. If he popped up in the pinch he should of made a base hit and the reason he didn't was so-and-so. And if he cracked one for three bases he ought to had a home run, only the ball wasn't lively, or the wind brought it back, or he tripped on a lump o' dirt, roundin' first base.

They was one afternoon in New York when he beat all records. Big Marquard was workin' against us and he was good.

In the first innin' Ike hit one clear over that right field stand, but it was a few feet foul. Then he got another foul and then the count come to two and two. Then Rube slipped one acrost on him and he was called out.

"What do you know about that!" he says afterward on the bench. "I lost count. I thought it was three and one, and I took a strike."

"You took a strike all right," says Carey. "Even the umps knowed it was a strike."

"Yes," says Ike, "but you can bet I wouldn't of took it if I'd knew it was the third one. The score board had it wrong."

"That score board ain't for you to look at," says Cap. "It's for you to hit that old pill against."

"Well," says Ike, "I could of hit that one over the score board if I'd knew it was the third."

"Was it a good ball?" I says.

"Well, no, it wasn't," says Ike. "It was inside."

"How far inside?" says Carey.

"Oh, two or three inches or half a foot," says Ike.

"I guess you wouldn't of threatened the score board with it then," says Cap.

"I'd of pulled it down the right foul line if I hadn't thought he'd call it a ball," says Ike

Well, in New York's part o' the innin' Doyle cracked one and Ike run back a mile and a half and caught it with one hand. We was all sayin' what a whale of a play it was, but he had to apologize just the same as for gettin' struck out.

"That stand's so high," he says, "that a man don't never see a ball till it's right on top o' you."

"Didn't you see that one?" ast Cap.

"Not at first," says Ike; "not till it raised up above the roof o' the stand."

"Then why did you start back as soon as the ball was hit?" says Cap.

"I knowed by the sound that he'd got a good hold of it," says Ike.

"Yes," says Cap, "but how'd you know what direction to run in?"

"Doyle usually hits 'em that way, the way I run," says Ike.

"Why don't you play blindfolded?" says Carey.

"Might as well, with that big high stand to bother a man," says Ike. "If I could of saw the ball all the time I'd of got it in my hip pocket."

Along in the fifth we was one run to the bad and Ike got on with one out. On the first ball throwed to Smitty, Ike went down. The ball was outside and Meyers throwed Ike out by ten feet.

You could see Ike's lips movin' all the way to the bench and when he got there he had his piece learned.

"Why didn't he swing?" he says.

"Why didn't you wait for his sign?" says Cap.

"He give me his sign," says Ike.

"What is his sign with you?" says Cap.

"Pickin' up some dirt with his right hand," says Ike.

"Well, I didn't see him do it," Cap says.

"He done it all right," says Ike.

Well, Smitty went out and they wasn't no more argument till they come in for the next innin'. Then Cap opened it up.

"You fellas better get your signs straight," he says.

"Do you mean me?" says Smitty.

"Yes," Cap says. "What's your sign with Ike?"

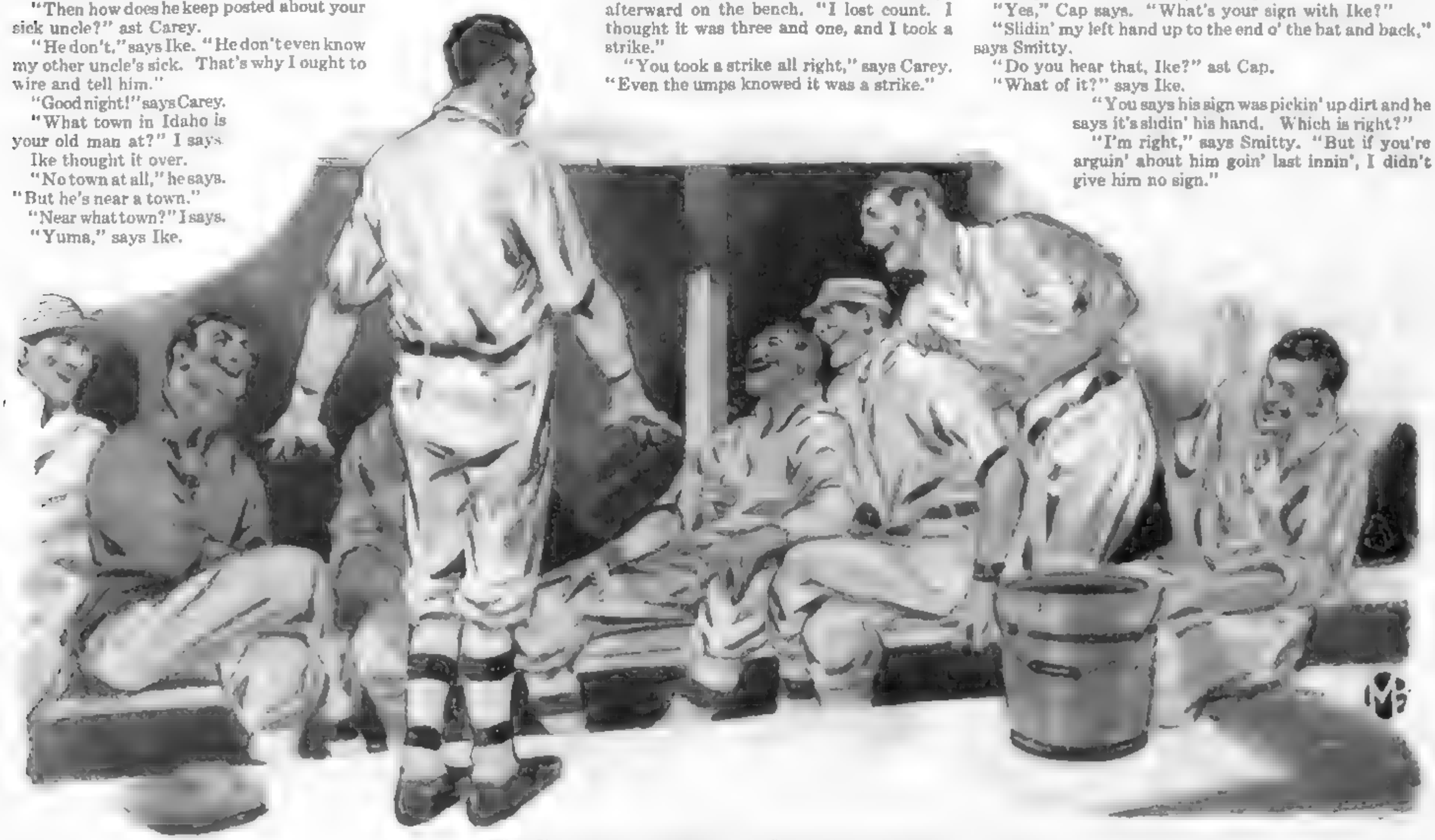
"Slidin' my left hand up to the end o' the bat and back," says Smitty.

"Do you hear that, Ike?" ast Cap.

"What of it?" says Ike.

"You says his sign was pickin' up dirt and he says it's slidin' his hand. Which is right?"

"I'm right," says Smitty. "But if you're arguin' about him goin' last innin', I didn't give him no sign."



When Ike Come in Everybody on the Bench Was in Hysterics

"You pulled your cap down with your right hand, didn't you?" ast Ike.

"Well, s'pose I did," says Smitty. "That don't mean nothin'. I never told you to take that for a sign, did I?"

"I thought maybe you meant to tell me and forgot," says Ike.

They couldn't none of us answer that and they wouldn't of been no more said if Ike had of shut up. But wile we was settin' there Carey got on with two out and stole second clean.

"There!" says Ike. "That's what I was tryin' to do and I'd of got away with it if Smitty'd swang and bothered the Indian."

"Oh!" says Smitty. "You was tryin' to steal then, was you? I thought you claimed I give you the hit and run."

"I didn't claim no such a thing," says Ike. "I thought maybe you might of gave me a sign, but I was goin' anyway because I thought I had a good start."

Cap prob'ly would of hit him with a bat, only just about that time Doyle booted one on Hayes and Carey come acrost with the run that tied.

Well, we go into the ninth finally, one and one, and Marquard walks McDonald with nobody out.

"Lay it down," says Cap to Ike.

And Ike goes up there with orders to bunt and cracks the first ball into that right-field stand! It was fair this time, and we're two ahead, but I didn't think about that at the time. I was too busy watchin' Cap's face. First he turned pale and then he got red as fire and then he got blue and purple, and finally he just laid back and busted out laughin'. So we wasn't afraid to laugh ourselfs when we seen him doin' it, and when Ike come in everybody on the bench was in hysterics.

But instead o' takin' advantage, Ike had to try and excuse himself. His play was to shut up and he didn't know how to make it.

"Well," he says, "if I hadn't hit quite so quick at that one I bet it'd of cleared the center-field fence."

Cap stopped laughin'.

"It'll cost you plain fifty," he says.

"What for?" says Ike.

"When I say 'bunt' I mean 'bunt,'" says Cap.

"You didn't say 'bunt,'" says Ike.

"I says 'Lay it down,'" says Cap. "If that don't mean 'bunt,' what does it mean?"

"'Lay it down' means 'bunt' all right," says Ike, "but I understood you to say 'Lay on it.'"

"All right," says Cap, "and the little misunderstandin' will cost you fifty."

Ike didn't say nothin' for a few minutes. Then he had another bright idear.

"I was just kiddin' about misunderstandin' you," he says. "I knowed you wanted me to bunt."

"Well, then, why didn't you bunt?" ast Cap.

"I was goin' to on the next ball," says Ike. "But I thought if I took a good wallop I'd have 'em all fooled. So I walloped at the first one to fool 'em, and I didn't have no intention o' hittin' it."

"You tried to miss it, did you?" says Cap.

"Yes," says Ike.

"How'd you happen to hit it?" ast Cap.

"Well," Ike says, "I was lookin' for him to throw me a fast one and I was goin' to swing under it. But he come with a hook and I met it right square where I was swingin' to go under the fast one."

"Great!" says Cap. "Boys," he says, "Ike's learned how to hit Marquard's curve. Pretend a fast one's comin' and then try to miss it. It's a good thing to know and Ike'd ought to be willin' to pay for the lesson. So I'm goin' to make it a hundred instead o' fifty."

The game wound up 3 to 1. The fine didn't go, because Ike hit like a wild man all through that trip and we made pretty near a clean-up. The night we went to Philly I got him cornered in the car and I says to him:

"Forget them alibis for a wile and tell me somethin'. What'd you do that for, swing that time against Marquard when you was told to bunt?"

"I'll tell you," he says. "That ball he throwed me looked just like the one I struck out on in the first innin' and I wanted to show Cap what I could of done to that other one if I'd knew it was the third strike."

"But," I says, "the one you struck out on in the first innin' was a fast ball."

"So was the one I cracked in the ninth," says Ike.

IV

YOU'VE saw Cap's wife, o' course. Well, her sister's about twict as good-lookin' as her, and that's goin' some.

Cap took his missus down to St. Louis the second trip and the other one come down from St. Joe to visit her. Her name is Dolly, and some doll is right.

Well, Cap was goin' to take the two sisters to a show and he wanted a beau for Dolly. He left it to her and she picked Ike. He'd hit three on the nose that afternoon—off'n Sallee, too.

They fell for each other that first evenin'. Cap told us how it come off. She begin flatterin' Ike for the star game he'd played and o' course he begin excusin' himself for not doin' better. So she thought he was modest and it went strong with her. And she believed everything he said and that made her solid with him—that and her make-up. They was together every mornin' and evenin' for the five days we was there. In the afternoons Ike played the grandest ball you ever see, hittin' and runnin' the bases like a fool and catchin' everything that stayed in the park.

I told Cap, I says: "You'd ought to keep the doll with us and he'd make Cobb's figures look sick."

But Dolly had to go back to St. Joe and we come home for a long serious.

Well, for the next three weeks Ike had a letter to read every day and he'd set in the clubhouse readin' it till mornin' practice was half over. Cap didn't say nothin' to him, because he was goin' so good. But I and Carey wasted a lot of our time tryin' to get him to own up who the letters was from. Fine chance!

"What are you readin'?" Carey'd say. "A bill?"

"No," Ike'd say, "not exactly a bill. It's a letter from a fella I used to go to school with."

"High school or college?" I'd ask him.

"College," he'd say.

"What college?" I'd say.

Then he'd stall a wile and then he'd say:

"I didn't go to the college myself, but my friend went there."

"How did it happen you didn't go?" Carey'd ask him.

"Well," he'd say, "they wasn't no colleges near where I lived."

"Didn't you live in Kansas City?" I'd say to him.

One time he'd say he did and another time he didn't. One time he says he lived in Michigan.

"Where at?" says Carey.

"Near Detroit," he says.

"Well," I says, "Detroit's near Ann Arbor and that's where they got the university."

"Yes," says Ike, "they got it there now, but they didn't have it there then."

"I come pretty near goin' to Syracuse," I says, "only they wasn't no railroads runnin' through there in them days."

"Where'd this friend o' yours go to college?" says Carey.

"I forget now," says Ike.

"Was it Carlisle?" ast Carey.

"No," says Ike, "his folks wasn't very well off."

"That's what barred me from Smith," I says.

"I was goin' to tackle Cornell's," says Carey, "but the doctor told me I'd have hay fever if I didn't stay up North."

"Your friend writes long letters," I says.

"Yes," says Ike; "he's tellin' me about a ball player."

"Where does he play?" ast Carey.

"Down in the Texas League—Fort Wayne," says Ike.

"It looks like a girl's writin'," Carey says.

"A girl wrote it," says Ike. "That's my friend's sister, writin' for him."

"Didn't they teach writin' at this here college where he went?" says Carey.

"Sure," Ike says, "they taught writin', but he got his hand cut off in a railroad wreck."

"How long ago?" I says.

"Right after he got out o' college," says Ike.

He Left it to Her and She Picked Ike

"Well," I says, "I should think he'd of learned to write with his left hand by this time."

"It's his left hand that was cut off," says Ike; "and he was left-handed."

"You get a letter every day," says Carey. "They're all the same writin'. Is he tellin' you about a different ball player every time he writes?"

"No," Ike says. "It's the same ball player. He just tells me what he does every day."

"From the size o' the letters, they don't play nothin' but double-headers down there," says Carey.

We figured that Ike spent most of his evenin's answerin' the letters from his "friend's sister," so we kept tryin' to date him up for shows and parties to see how he'd duck out of 'em. He was bugs over spaghetti, so we told him one day that they was goin' to be a big feed of it over to Joe's that night and he was invited.

"How long'll it last?" he says.

"Well," we says, "we're goin' right over there after the game and stay till they close up."

"I can't go," he says, "unless they leave me come home at eight bells."

"Nothin' doin'," says Carey. "Joe'd get sore."

"I can't go then," says Ike.

"Why not?" I ast him.

"Well," he says, "my landlady locks up the house at eight and I left my key home."

"You can come and stay with me," says Carey.

"No," he says, "I can't sleep in a strange bed."

"How do you get along when we're on the road?" says I.

"I don't never sleep the first night anywheres," he says. "After that I'm all right."

"You'll have time to chase home and get your key right after the game," I told him.

"The key ain't home," says Ike. "I lent it to one o' the other fellas and he's went out o' town and took it with him."

"Couldn't you borry another key off'n the landlady?" Carey ast him.

"No," he says, "that's the only one they is."

Well, the day before we started East again, Ike come into the clubhouse all smiles.

"Your birthday?" I ast him.

"No," he says.

"What do you feel so good about?" I says.

"Got a letter from my old man," he says. "My uncle's goin' to get well."

"Is that the one in Nebraska?" says I.

"Not right in Nebraska," says Ike. "Near there."

But afterwards we got the right dope from Cap. Dolly'd blew in from Missouri and was goin' to make the trip with her sister.

V

WELL, I want to alibi Carey and I for what come off in Boston. If we'd of had any idear what we was doin', we'd never did it. They wasn't nobody outside o' maybe Ike and the dame that felt worse over it than I and Carey.

The first two days we didn't see nothin' of Ike and her except out to the park. The rest o' the time they was sight-seein' over to Cambridge and down to Revere and out to Brook-a-line and all the other places where the rubes go.

But when we come into the beanery after the third game Cap's wife called us over.

"If you want to see somethin' pretty," she says, "look at the third finger on Sis's left hand."

Well, o' course we knowed before we looked that it wasn't goin' to be no hangnail. Nobody was su'prised when Dolly blew into the dinin' room with it—a rock that Ike'd bought off'n Diamond Joe the first trip to New York. Only o' course it'd been set into a lady's-size ring instead o' the automobile tire he'd been wearin'.

Cap and his missus and Ike and Dolly ett supper together, only Ike didn't eat nothin', but just set there blushin' and spillin' things on the tablecloth. I heard him excusin' himself for not havin' no appetite. He says he couldn't never eat when he was clost to the ocean. He'd forgot about them sixty-five oysters he destroyed the first night o' the trip before.

He was goin' to take her to a show, so after supper he went upstairs to change his collar. She had to doll up, too, and o' course Ike was through long before her.

If you remember the hotel in Boston, they's a little parlor where the piano's at and then they's another little parlor openin' off o' that. Well, when Ike come down Smitty was playin' a few chords and I and Carey was harmonizin'. We seen Ike go up to the desk to leave his key and we called him in. He tried to duck away, but we wouldn't stand for it.

We ast him what he was all duded up for and he says he was goin' to the theayter.

"Goin' alone?" says Carey.

"No," he says, "a friend o' mine's goin' with me."

"What do you say if we go along?" says Carey.

"I ain't only got two tickets," he says.

"Well," says Carey, "we can go down there with you and buy our own seats; maybe we can all get together."

(Concluded on Page 30)

SOMETHING NEW

By Pelham Grenville Wodehouse

ILLUSTRATED BY F. R. GRUGER

"Do You Seriously Expect Me to Lie in Bed While You Do All the Work, and Then to Take a Half Share in the Reward?"

VIII— Continued

GEORGE EMERSON sat in his bedroom smoking a cigarette. A light of resolution was in his eyes. He glanced at the table beside his bed and at what was on that table, and the light of resolution flamed into a glare of fanatic determination. So might a medieval knight have looked on the eve of setting forth to rescue a maiden from a dragon.

His cigarette burned down. He looked at his watch, put it back, and lit another cigarette. His aspect was the aspect of one waiting for the appointed hour. Smoking his second cigarette, he resumed his meditations. They had to do with Aline Peters.

George Emerson was troubled about Aline Peters. Watching over her, as he did, with a lover's eye, he had perceived that about her which distressed him. On the terrace that morning she had been abrupt to him—what in a girl of less angelic disposition one might have called snappy. Yes, to be just, she had snapped at him. That meant something. It meant that Aline was not well. It meant what her pallor and tired eyes meant—that the life she was leading was doing her no good.

Twelve nights had George dined at Blandings Castle, and on each of the twelve nights he had been distressed to see the manner in which Aline, declining the baked meats, had restricted herself to the miserable vegetable messes which were all that the doctor's orders permitted to her suffering father. George's pity had its limits. His heart did not bleed for Mr. Peters. Mr. Peters' diet was his own affair. But that Aline should starve herself in this fashion, purely by way of moral support to her parent, was another matter.

George was perhaps a shade material. Himself a robust young man and taking what might be called an outsize in meals, maybe he attached too much importance to food as an adjunct to the perfect life. In his survey of Aline he took a line through his own requirements; and believing that twelve such dinners as he had seen Aline partake of would have killed him he decided that his loved one was on the point of starvation.

No human being, he held, could exist on such Barmecide feasts. That Mr. Peters continued to do so did not occur to him as a flaw in his reasoning. He looked on Mr. Peters as a sort of machine. Successful business men often give that impression to the young. If George had been told that Mr. Peters went along on gasoline, like an automobile, he would not have been much surprised. But that Aline—his Aline—should have to deny herself the exercise of that mastication of rich meats which, together with the gift of speech, raises man above the beasts of the field —— That was what tortured George.

He had devoted the day to thinking out a solution of the problem. Such was the overflowing goodness of Aline's heart that not even he could persuade her to withdraw her moral support from her father and devote herself to keeping up her strength as she should do. It was necessary to think of some other plan.

And then a speech of hers had come back to him. She had said—poor child:

"I do get a little hungry sometimes—late at night generally."

The problem was solved. Food should be brought to her late at night.

On the table by his bed was a stout sheet of packing paper. On this lay, like one of those pictures of still life that one sees on suburban parlor walls, a tongue, some bread, a knife, a fork, salt, a corkscrew and a small bottle of white wine.

It is a pleasure, when one has been able hitherto to portray George's devotion only through the medium of his speeches, to produce these comestibles as Exhibit A, to show that he loved Aline with no common love; for it had not been an easy task to get them there. In a house of smaller dimensions he would have raided the larder without shame, but at Blandings Castle there was no saying where the larder might be. All he knew was that it lay somewhere beyond that green-baize door opening on the hall, past which he was wont to go on his way to bed. To prowl through the maze of the servants' quarters in search of it was impossible. The only thing to be done was to go to Market Blandings and buy the things.

Fortune had helped him at the start by arranging that the Honorable Freddie, also, should be going to Market Blandings in the little runabout, which seated two. He had acquiesced in George's suggestion that he, George, should occupy the other seat, but with a certain lack of enthusiasm, it seemed to George. He had not volunteered any reason as to why he was going to Market Blandings in the little runabout, and on arrival there had betrayed an unmistakable desire to get rid of George at the earliest opportunity.

As this had suited George to perfection, he being desirous of getting rid of the Honorable Freddie at the earliest opportunity, he had not been inquisitive, and they had parted on the outskirts of the town without mutual confidences.

George had then proceeded to the grocer's, and after that to another of the Market Blandings inns—not the Emsworth Arms—where he had bought the white wine. He did not believe in white wine, for he was a young man with a palate and mistrusted country cellars; but he assumed that, whatever its quality, it would cheer Aline in the small hours.

He had then tramped the whole five miles back to the castle with his purchases. It was here that his real troubles began and the quality of his love was tested. The walk, to a heavily laden man, was bad enough; but it was as nothing compared with the ordeal of smuggling the cargo up to his bedroom. Superman though he was, George was alive to the delicacy of the situation. One cannot convey food and drink to one's room in a strange house without, if detected, seeming to cast a slur on the table of the host. It was as one who carries dispatches through an enemy's lines that George took cover, emerged from cover, dodged, ducked and ran; and the moment when he sank down on his bed, the door locked behind him, was one of the happiest of his life.

The recollection of that ordeal made the one he proposed to embark on now seem slight in comparison. All he had to do was to go to Aline's room, knock softly on the door until signs of wakefulness made themselves heard from within, and then dart away into the shadows whence he had come, and so back to bed. He gave Aline credit for the intelligence that would enable her, on finding a tongue, some bread, a knife, a fork, salt, a corkscrew and a bottle of white wine on the mat, to know what to do with them—and perhaps to guess whose was the loving hand that had laid them there.

The second clause, however, was not important, for he proposed to tell her whose was the hand next morning. Other people might hide their light under a bushel—not George Emerson.

It only remained now to allow time to pass until the hour should be sufficiently advanced to insure safety for the expedition. He looked at his watch again. It was nearly two. By this time the house must be asleep.

He gathered up the tongue, the bread, the knife, the fork, the salt, the corkscrew and the bottle of white wine, and left the room. All was still. He stole downstairs.

On his chair in the gallery that ran round the hall, swathed in an overcoat and wearing rubber-soled shoes, the Efficient Baxter sat and gazed into the darkness. He had lost the first fine careless rapture, as it were, which had helped him to endure these vigils, and a great weariness was on him. He found difficulty in keeping his eyes open, and when they were open the darkness seemed to press on them painfully. In short, the Efficient Baxter had had about enough of it.

Time stood still. Baxter's thoughts began to wander. He knew that this was fatal and exerted himself to drag them back. He tried to concentrate his mind on some one definite thing. He selected the scarab as a suitable object, but it played him false. He had hardly concentrated on the scarab before his mind was straying off to ancient Egypt, to Mr. Peters' dyspepsia, and on a dozen other branch lines of thought.

He blamed the fat man at the inn for this. If the fat man had not thrust his presence and conversation on him he would have been able to enjoy a sound sleep in the afternoon, and would have come fresh to his nocturnal task. He began to muse on the fat man. And by a curious coincidence whom should he meet a few moments later but this same man.

It happened in a somewhat singular manner, though it all seemed perfectly logical and consecutive to Baxter. He was climbing up the outer wall of Westminster Abbey in his pyjamas and a tall hat, when the fat man, suddenly thrusting his head out of a window which Baxter had not noticed until that moment, said "Hello, Freddie!" in a loud voice.

Baxter was about to explain that his name was not Freddie when he found himself walking down Piccadilly with Ashe Marson. Ashe said to him: "Nobody loves me. Everybody steals my grapefruit!" And the pathos of it cut the Efficient Baxter like a knife. He was on the point of replying when Ashe vanished, and Baxter discovered that he was not in Piccadilly, as he had supposed, but in an aëroplane with Mr. Peters, hovering over the castle.

Mr. Peters had a bomb in his hand, which he was fondling with loving care. He explained to Baxter that he had stolen it from the Earl of Emsworth's museum. "I did it with a slice of cold beef and a pickle," he explained; and Baxter found himself realizing that that was the only way. "Now watch me drop it," said Mr. Peters, closing one eye and taking aim at the castle. "I have to do this by the doctor's orders."

He loosed the bomb and immediately Baxter was lying in bed watching it drop. He was frightened, but the idea of moving did not occur to him. The bomb fell very

The Efficient Baxter Made a Dive and With an Exclamation of Triumph Rose to His Feet

slowly, dipping and fluttering like a feather. It came closer and closer. Then it struck with a roar and a sheet of flame.

Baxter woke to a sound of tumult and crashing. For a moment he hovered between dreaming and waking, and then sleep passed from him, and he was aware that something noisy and exciting was in progress in the hall below.

Coming down to first causes, the only reason why collisions of any kind occur is because two bodies defy Nature's law that a given spot on a given plane shall at a given moment of time be occupied by only one body.

There was a certain spot near the foot of the great staircase which Ashe, going downstairs, and George Emerson, coming up, had to pass on their respective routes. George reached it at one minute and three seconds after two A. M., moving silently but swiftly; and Ashe, also maintaining a good rate of speed, arrived there at one minute and four seconds after the hour, when he ceased to walk and began to fly, accompanied by George Emerson, now going down. His arms were round George's neck and George was clinging to his waist.

In due season they reached the foot of the stairs and a small table, covered with occasional china and photographs in frames, which stood adjacent to the foot of the stairs. That—especially the occasional china—was what Baxter had heard.

George Emerson thought it was a burglar. Ashe did not know what it was, but he knew he wanted to shake it off; so he insinuated a hand beneath George's chin and pushed upward. George, by this time parted forever from the tongue, the bread, the knife, the fork, the salt, the corkscrew and the bottle of white wine, and having both hands free for the work of the moment, held Ashe with the left and punched him in the ribs with the right.

Ashe, removing his left arm from George's neck, brought it up as a reënforcement to his right, and used both as a means of throttling George. This led George, now permanently underneath, to grasp Ashe's ears firmly and twist them, relieving the pressure on his throat and causing Ashe to utter the first vocal sound of the evening, other than the explosive Ugh! that both had emitted at the instant of impact.

Ashe dislodged George's hands from his ears and hit George in the ribs with his elbow. George kicked Ashe on the left ankle. Ashe rediscovered George's throat and began to squeeze it afresh, and a pleasant time was being had by both when the Efficient Baxter, whizzing down the stairs, tripped over Ashe's legs, shot forward and cannoned into another table, also covered with occasional china and photographs in frames.

The hall at Blandings Castle was more an extra drawing-room than a hall; and Lady Ann Warblington, when not nursing a sick headache in her bedroom, would dispense afternoon tea there to her guests. Consequently it was dotted pretty freely with small tables. There were, indeed, no fewer than five more in various spots, waiting to be bumped into and smashed.

The bumping into and smashing of small tables, however, is a task that calls for plenty of time—a leisured pursuit; and neither George nor Ashe, a third party having been added to their little affair, felt a desire to stay on and do the thing properly. Ashe was strongly opposed to being discovered and called on to account for his presence there at that hour; and George, conscious of the tongue and its adjuncts now strewn about the hall, had a similar prejudice against the tedious explanations that detection must involve.

As though by mutual consent each relaxed his grip. They stood panting for an instant; then, Ashe in the direction where he supposed the green-baize door of the servants' quarters to be, George to the staircase that led to his bedroom, they went away from that place.

They had hardly done so when Baxter, having disassociated himself from the contents of the table he had upset, began to grope his way toward the electric-light switch, the same being situated near the foot of the main staircase. He went on all fours, as a safer, though slower, method of locomotion than the one he had attempted before.

Noises began to make themselves heard on the floors above. Roused by the merry crackle of occasional china, the house party was bestirring itself to investigate. Voices sounded, muffled and inquiring.

Meantime, Baxter crawled steadily on his hands and knees toward the light switch. He was in much the same condition as a White Hope of the ring after he has put his chin in the way of the fist of a rival member of the Truck Drivers' Union. He knew that he was still alive. More he could not say. The mists of sleep, which still shrouded his brain, and the shake-up he had had from his encounter with the table, a corner of which he had rammed with the top of his head, combined to produce a dreamlike state.

And so the Efficient Baxter crawled on; and as he crawled his hand, advancing cautiously, fell on something—something that was not alive; something clammy and ice-cold, the touch of which filled him with nameless horror.

To say that Baxter's heart stood still would be physiologically inexact. The heart does not stand still. Whatever the emotions of its owner, it goes on beating. It would be more accurate to say that Baxter felt like a man taking his first ride in an express elevator, who has outstripped his vital organs by several floors and sees no immediate prospect of their ever catching up with him again. There was a great cold void where the more intimate parts of his body should have been. His throat was dry and contracted. The flesh of his back crawled, for he knew what it was he had touched.

Painful and absorbing as had been his encounter with the table, Baxter had never lost sight of the fact that close beside him a furious battle between unseen forces was in progress. He had heard the bumping and the thumping and the tense breathing even as he picked occasional china from his person. Such a combat, he had felt, could hardly fail to result in personal injury to either the party of the first part or the party of the second part, or both. He knew now that worse than mere injury had happened and that he knelt in the presence of death.

There was no doubt that the man was dead. Insensibility alone could never have produced this icy chill. He raised his head in the darkness, and cried aloud to those approaching. He meant to cry: "Help! Murder!" But fear prevented clear articulation. What he shouted was: "Heh! Mer!" On which, from the neighborhood of the staircase, somebody began to fire a revolver.

The Earl of Emsworth had been sleeping a sound and peaceful sleep when the imbroglio began downstairs. He sat up and listened. Yes; undoubtedly burglars! He switched on his light and jumped out of bed. He took a pistol from a drawer, and thus armed went to look into the matter. The dreamy peer was no poltroon.

It was quite dark when he arrived on the scene of conflict in the van of a mixed bevy of pyjamaed and dressing-gowned relations. He was in the van because, meeting these relations in the passage above, he had said to them: "Let me go first. I have a pistol." And they had let him go first. They were, indeed, awfully nice about it, not thrusting themselves forward or jostling or anything, but behaving in a modest and self-effacing manner that was pretty to watch.

When Lord Emsworth said "Let me go first," young Algernon Wooster, who was on the very point of leaping to the fore, said, "Yes, by Jove! Sound scheme, by Gad!"—and withdrew into the background; and the Bishop of Godalming said: "By all means, Clarence—undoubtedly; most certainly precede us."

When his sense of touch told him he had reached the foot of the stairs, Lord Emsworth paused. The hall was very dark and the burglars seemed temporarily to have suspended activities. And then one of them, a man with a ruffianly, grating voice, spoke. What it was he said Lord Emsworth could not understand. It sounded like "Heh! Mer!"—probably some secret signal to his confederates. Lord Emsworth raised his revolver and emptied it in the direction of the sound.

Extremely fortunately for him, the Efficient Baxter had not changed his all-fours attitude. This undoubtedly saved Lord Emsworth the worry of engaging a new secretary. The shots sang above Baxter's head one after the other, six in all, and found other billets than his person. They disposed themselves as follows: The first shot broke a window and whistled out into the night; the second shot hit the dinner gong and made a perfectly extraordinary noise, like the Last Trump; the third, fourth and fifth shots embedded themselves in the wall; the sixth and final shot hit a life-size picture of his lordship's maternal grandmother squarely in the face and improved it out of all knowledge.

One thinks no worse of Lord Emsworth's maternal grandmother because she looked like Eddie Foy, and had allowed herself to be painted, after the heavy classic manner of some of the portraits of a hundred years ago, in the character of Venus—suitably draped, of course—rising from the sea; but it was beyond the possibility of denial that her grandson's bullet permanently removed one of Blandings Castle's most prominent eyesores.

Having emptied his revolver, Lord Emsworth said, "Who is there? Speak!" in rather an aggrieved tone, as though he felt he had done his part in breaking the ice, and it was now for the intruder to exert himself and bear his share of the social amenities.

The Efficient Baxter did not reply. Nothing in the world could have induced him to speak at that moment, or to make any sound whatsoever that might betray his position to a dangerous maniac who might at any instant reload his pistol and resume the fusillade. Explanations, in his opinion, could be deferred until somebody had the presence of mind to switch on the lights. He flattened himself on the carpet and hoped for better things. His cheek touched the corpse beside him; but though he winced and shuddered he made no outcry. After those six shots he was through with outcries.

On the Bottom Step There Was a Faint But Conclusive Stain of Crimson!

A voice from above, the bishop's voice, said: "I think you have killed him, Clarence."

Another voice, that of Colonel Horace Mant, said:

"Switch on those dashed lights! Why doesn't somebody? Dash it!"

The whole strength of the company began to demand light.

When the lights came, it was from the other side of the hall. Six revolver shots, fired at quarter past two in the morning, will rouse even sleeping domestics. The servants' quarters were buzzing like a hive. Shrill feminine screams were puncturing the air. Mr. Beach, the butler, in a suit of pink silk pyjamas, of which none would have suspected him, was leading a party of men servants down the stairs—not so much because he wanted to lead them as because they pushed him.

The passage beyond the green-baize door became congested, and there were cries for Mr. Beach to open it and look through and see what was the matter; but Mr. Beach was smarter than that and wriggled back so that he no longer headed the procession. This done, he shouted:

"Open that door there! Open that door! Look and see what the matter is."

Ashe opened the door. Since his escape from the hall he had been lurking in the neighborhood of the green-baize door and had been engulfed by the swirling throng. Finding himself with elbow-room for the first time, he pushed through, swung the door open and switched on the lights.

They shone on a collection of semi-dressed figures, crowding the staircase; on a hall littered with china and glass; on a dented dinner gong; on a retouched and improved portrait of the late Countess of Emsworth; and on the Efficient Baxter, in an overcoat and rubber-soled shoes, lying beside a cold tongue. At no great distance lay a number of other objects—a knife, a fork, some bread, salt, a corkscrew and a bottle of white wine.

Using the word in the sense of saying something coherent, the Earl of Emsworth was the first to speak. He peered down at his recumbent secretary and said: "Baxter! My dear fellow—what the devil?"

The feeling of the company was one of profound disappointment. They were disgusted at the anticlimax. For an instant, when the Efficient One did not move, hope began to stir; but as soon as it was seen that he was not even injured gloom reigned. One of two things would have satisfied them—either a burglar or a corpse. A burglar would have been welcome, dead or alive; but if Baxter proposed to fill the part adequately it was imperative that he be dead. He had disappointed them deeply by turning out to be the object of their quest. That he was not even grazed was too much.

There was a cold silence as he slowly raised himself from the floor. As his eyes fell on the tongue, he started and remained gazing fixedly at it. Surprise paralyzed him.

Lord Emsworth was also looking at the tongue and he leaped to a not unreasonable conclusion. He spoke coldly and haughtily; for he was not only annoyed, like the others, at the anticlimax, but offended. He knew that he was not one of your energetic hosts who exert themselves unceasingly to supply their guests with entertainment; but there was one thing on which, as a host, he did pride himself—in the material matters of life he did his guests well; he kept an admirable table.

"My dear Baxter," he said in the tones he usually reserved for the correction of his son Freddie, "if your hunger is so great that you are unable to wait for breakfast, and have to raid my larder in the middle of the night, I wish to goodness you would contrive to make less noise about it. I do not grudge you the food—help yourself when you please—but do remember that people who have not such keen appetites as yourself like to sleep during the night. A far better plan, my dear fellow, would be to have sandwiches or buns—or whatever you consider most sustaining—sent up to your bedroom."

Not even the bullets had disordered Baxter's faculties so much as this monstrous accusation. Explanations pushed and jostled one another in his fermenting brain, but he could not utter them. On every side he met gravely reproachful eyes. George Emerson was looking at him in pained disgust. Ashe Marson's face was the face of one who could never have believed this had he not seen it with his own eyes. The scrutiny of the knife-and-shoe boy was unendurable.

He stammered. Words began to proceed from him, tripping and stumbling over one another. Lord Emsworth's frigid disapproval did not relax

"Pray do not apologize, Baxter. The desire for food is human. It is your boisterous mode of securing and conveying it that I deprecate. Let us all go to bed"

"But, Lord Emsworth ——"

One of Two Things Would Have Satisfied Them—Either a Burglar or a Corpse

"To bed!" repeated his lordship firmly.

The company began to stream moodily upstairs. The lights were switched off. The Efficient Baxter dragged himself away. From the darkness in the direction of the servants' door a voice spoke.

"Greedy pig!" said the voice scornfully.

It sounded like the voice of the fresh young knife-and-shoe boy, but Baxter was too broken to investigate. He continued his retreat without pausing.

"Stuffin' of 'isself at all hours!" said the voice.

There was a murmur of approval from the unseen throng of domestics.

IX

AS WE grow older and realize more clearly the limitations of human happiness, we come to see that the only real and abiding pleasure in life is to give pleasure to other people. One must assume that the Efficient Baxter had not reached the age when this comes home to a man, for the fact that he had given genuine pleasure to some dozens of his fellow men brought him no balm.

There was no doubt about the pleasure he had given. Once they had got over their disappointment at finding that he was not a dead burglar, the house party rejoiced whole-heartedly at the break in the monotony of life at Blandings Castle. Relations who had not been on speaking terms for years forgot their quarrels and strolled about the grounds in perfect harmony, abusing Baxter. The general verdict was that he was insane.

"Don't tell me that young fellow's all there," said Colonel Horace Mant; "because I know better. Have you noticed his eye? Furtive! Shifty! Nasty gleam in it. Besides—dash it!—did you happen to take a look at the hall last night after he had been there? It was in ruins, my dear sir—absolute dashed ruins. It was positively littered with broken china and tables that had been bowled over. Don't tell me that was just an accidental collision in the dark.

"My dear sir, the man must have been thrashing about—absolutely thrashing about, like a dashed salmon on a dashed hook. He must have had a paroxysm of some kind—some kind of a dashed fit.

"A doctor could give you the name for it. It's a well-known form of insanity. Paranoia—isn't that what they call it? Rush of blood to the head, followed by a general running amuck.

"I've heard fellows who have been in India talk of it. Natives get it. Don't know what they're doing, and charge through the streets taking cracks at people with dashed whacking great knives. Same with this young man, probably in a modified form at present. He ought to be in a home. One of these nights, if this grows on him, he will be massacring Emsworth in his bed."

"My dear Horace!" The Bishop of Godalming's voice was properly horror-stricken, but there was a certain unctuous relish in it.

"Take my word for it! Though, mind you, I don't say they aren't well suited. Everyone knows that Emsworth has been, to all practical intents and purposes, a dashed lunatic for years. What was it that young fellow Emerson, Freddie's American friend, was saying the other day about some acquaintance of his who was not quite right in the head? Nobody in the house—was that it? Something to that effect, at any rate. I felt at the time that it was a perfect description of Emsworth."

"My dear Horace! Your father-in-law! The head of the family!"

"A dashed lunatic, my dear sir—head of the family or no head of the family. A man as absent-minded as he is has no right to call himself sane. Nobody in the house I recollect it now—nobody in the house except the gas, and that has not been turned on. That's Emsworth!"

The Efficient Baxter, who had just left his presence, was feeling much the same about his noble employer. After a sleepless night he had begun at an early hour to try to corner Lord Emsworth in order to explain to him the true inwardness of last night's happenings. Eventually he had tracked him to the museum, where he found him happily engaged in painting a cabinet of birds' eggs. He was seated on a small stool, a large pot of red paint on the floor beside him, dabbing at the cabinet with a dripping brush. He was absorbed and made no attempt whatever to follow his secretary's remarks.

For ten minutes Baxter gave a vivid picture of his vigil and the manner in which it had been interrupted.

"Just so; just so, my dear fellow," said the earl when he had finished. "I quite understand. All I say is, if you do require additional food in the night let one of the servants bring it to your room before bedtime; then there will be no danger of these disturbances. There is no possible objection to your eating a hundred meals a day, my good Baxter, provided you do not rouse the whole house over them. Some of us like to sleep during the night."

"But, Lord Emsworth! I have just explained —— It was not—I was not ——"

"Never mind, my dear fellow; never mind. Why make such an important thing of it? Many people like a light snack before actually retiring. Doctors, I believe, sometimes

(Continued on Page 41)

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Hyphenated Neutrality

SO FAR as we are able to understand those quasi fellow-citizens who insist on a hyphen, their idea is that Uncle Sam should take no part whatever in the war except to tie England's hands behind her. The United States having performed that neutral office, they would have it stand quite aloof and observe the ensuing homicide with an impartial mind.

Great Britain has spent much effort in building a navy, which was not designed for ornamental purposes but specifically to dominate the sea in war. Present ability to import war munitions from neutral countries is the natural fruit of that preparation, exactly as driving the Russians out of Galicia was the fruit of Germany's preparations on land. But hyphenated neutrality wants this country to take away the advantage a supreme navy gives.

The navy is England's special weapon, as the army is Germany's. Asking the United States to blunt England's weapon is a peculiar expression of neutrality. The only theory that would justify it is that Germany ought to fix the terms on which her adversaries shall fight. A suggestion that Germany, instead of taking advantage of superior preparations on land, should politely dismiss a third of her army and scrap her big guns, would have about the same standing in a neutral mind as the notion that the Allies should not take due advantage of their superior preparations at sea.

In this war business a hyphen is like a weather vane—if it does not show immediately which way the wind is blowing, what is it good for?

The Country Retailer

BROADLY speaking, almost anybody in a country town can get a vacant storeroom on or near Main Street, and some sort of stock of goods to put into it. Though the town itself increases little or not at all in size, and the farming population on whose trade it depends increases little or not at all, the number of people in the town who have something to sell at retail does increase. Our own observation leads to that conclusion and the census lends color to it. The enumeration of 1900 gave eight hundred thousand retail dealers; that of 1910 gives almost twelve hundred thousand.

New industries spring up. For example, there is the automobile, with its manifold accessories; the various evolutions of the phonograph; nearly every village now has its electric-light plant, which means a demand for bulbs, fans, and so on; citrus fruits and bananas of late years have become almost as staple in the country as bread. So in the country town you will find new shops selling these and other things.

Probably, then, the number of country retailers tends to increase faster than the population to which they must look for support. Going back to 1890, the total number of retail merchants was not greatly over half that of 1910. From 1890 to 1910 the total rural population—which includes people living in the country and in towns of less than twenty-five hundred inhabitants—increased, roughly, only one-fifth. Eight states, including Ohio and Indiana, had a smaller rural population in 1910 than twenty years before. Illinois, Iowa, and even Kansas, showed virtually no gain in rural population in twenty years.

Of course the rural population has a decidedly greater purchasing power than in 1890 and new wants. It was not troubling itself then about spark plugs, electric fans and phonographs; yet the rural retailer, on the whole, is hard pressed by competition at home. If the druggist puts in a stock of cameras, and gets them going, the hardware man and the garage immediately put in stocks of cameras. And there is the big competition of the mail-order houses and the city stores. With the parcel post, the automobile and the interurban trolley, the rural population is less dependent on the nearest store.

It seems tolerably clear that the country retailer who succeeds under these conditions must have something more than just a stock of goods to sell. Broadly speaking, anybody can get a stock of goods to sell. The store that succeeds must have some attraction which distinguishes it from just any store. In every country town, so far as we have been able to discover, there are retailers who do succeed well in spite of competition at home and abroad.

It can be done, but it will not do itself. The broad problem of the country retailer is one of the most difficult we know of in the field of business. Those who depend on the country retailer for distribution can well afford to study it.

Our Amiable Government

ONE can hardly consider the past year in Europe without wondering what that kind of acid test would disclose if applied to the Government of the United States. That it would show a muddle everybody knows—especially everybody who remembers the Spanish-American War; but really how broad and deep a muddle? How much life and treasure should we have to throw in before we made a firm footing and wallowed out of it?

Take, for example, the shipping question. For years we have talked with vague hopefulness about an American merchant marine. We now wake to a pleasing realization that Congress has probably legislated the American flag altogether off the Pacific Ocean. For years we have talked hopefully about a great system of inland-water transportation—to create which many citizens want the Federal Government to spend a huge sum. Our only very important inland-water traffic has been on the Great Lakes. We now receive cheering intelligence that Congress has possibly legislated a large part of the shipping off the Great Lakes. That it has not actually legislated it all off is merely a piece of good luck. Nobody happened to suggest a half-baked measure that would have closed the Lakes entirely.

We can say that our Government is good-natured. Nobody in it really intends much harm. Nearly everybody's intentions are quite amiable. Somebody had a set of humane notions as to how ships should be operated. Whether ships could or would be operated in that desirable manner was immaterial. The notion was pleasing and Congress adopted it.

Somebody else had an interesting theory that shipping lines should not make joint agreements on rates. True, the world's experience had demonstrated that in normal times some sort of rate agreement was necessary to stabilize the shipping business. But what's the world's experience to us when it conflicts with an academic theory that pleases us?

Somebody had another amusing theory that railroads should not own steamship lines. It would be nicer, he thought, if steamship lines were independent. The trivial facts that railroads did own a great fleet of Lake steamers and that some seventy million tons of freight were carried yearly on the Lakes at a cost only a trifle over half a mill a ton-mile, were not permitted in the least to interfere with putting this pleasing theory into a statute. Our Government never bothers with dull experience when a theory tickles its fancy.

So, under authority of Congress, railroads have been ordered to dispose of their Lake steamers. One road has begun cutting its boats in two for the purpose of sending them round to the Atlantic through the Welland Canal and putting them in a service where extraordinary war conditions enable steamers to operate profitably in spite of Congress.

Meager as it is, American shipping has been serving one more or less useful purpose—the boys at Washington have got a lot of amusement out of it.

Getting Out of Debt

APPARENTLY we are richer by a couple of billion dollars or so than we thought we were. The quantity of American securities held in Europe has commonly been placed at five or six billion dollars. Since the income tax went into effect, requiring a certificate by the holder to accompany bond coupons, it is easier to trace ownership of securities than before. A committee of railroad men, after extensive and pretty thorough investigation, finds two and a half billion dollars of railroad bonds, stocks and notes held in Europe. This amount is subject to considerable reduction, representing foreign holdings that have been sold on this side since the investigation began. To it must be added whatever industrial, municipal, and other than railroad bonds or stocks are owned over there; but railroad securities undoubtedly constitute the greater bulk of foreign holdings.

All the time some foreign-owned American stocks and bonds are being sold on this side. France has been industriously scraping up all the American bonds of certain issues she could find, to be used as collateral for a loan in New York. We are steadily paying or offsetting whatever we owe Europe; and it is not at all a bad thing that a great amount of foreign-owned securities hangs over our markets. It acts as a brake on speculation. With big surpluses of loanable money in the banks, a brake on speculation is decidedly a good thing.

The Fighting Instinct

WE DO not remember ever having read that monkeys are especially quarrelsome beasts; but one of the deepest cravings of human nature is to lick somebody. An individual capable of assisting any body of men to lick any other body of men has always been a hero. Almost always, if his capabilities in that line have been of a notably high order, he could pick out any reward he chose; and, so long as his special skill held good, those he led gladly subjected themselves to him.

The tremendous hold a successful military leader has on the men who are getting themselves shot and cut up under his able direction, and on their more or less bereaved kin at home, is one of the larger facts of history. The French immediately forgot a temporary interest in such matters as liberty, equality and fraternity in ecstatic devotion to an individual who could lead them out and wallop anybody that came in sight. Very soon they had no clearer idea what the walloping was about than Napoleon had. It was sufficient that they licked the opponent.

That was the acme of human glory. No one really attempts to account for it logically. There is no logical accounting for it. The phenomenon belongs frankly in the region of romance, where things explain themselves instinctively and emotionally. To lick somebody is glory. And what is glory? Why, it is a tingling in the chest, a surge of blood to the head—a sensation no doubt very like that enjoyed by the victorious dog as, with back bristling and head cocked, he watches the vanquished foe limp off.

Probably the sensation continues, in diminuendo, while the victor licks his own wounds. This remarkable thirst for glory probably accounts mostly for South Germany's latter-day devotion to the House of Hohenzollern.

Usury Laws

IN A NUMBER of states farmers constantly pay more than the statutory rate of interest. The usury law is evaded by charging a commission in addition to interest, by discounting the note, and by various other devices. In one comprehensive discussion of rural credit we find a statement that rigid enforcement of usury laws would go farther toward providing farmers with short-time loans on reasonable terms than any other single expedient. But we doubt that it would help at all.

Broadly speaking, the price of money—from medieval times, when all interest was forbidden, down to the present—never has been controlled by law. As a rule, usury laws are obeyed only when they name a rate of interest which is no lower than that which the higgling of the market would have established without any statute whatever on the subject.

Suppose lendable capital is scarce and borrowers are unable to give first-class security, so that a large element of risk attends lending. Under those conditions money, we will say, commands twelve per cent interest. Now suppose a rigid usury law is enacted, fixing the legal rate at six per cent and threatening the lender who takes more with loss of principal and interest. Does money then fall to six per cent? Not at all. The law injects an additional element of risk, and in order to cover that new element money advances to fifteen per cent. That has been the common experience.

In attacking the city loan-shark abuse, for example, one of the first remedial measures was to secure an amendment to the usury law sanctioning rates of interest anywhere from twelve to twenty-four per cent on loans of the class made by sharks. The old law, we will say, prescribed seven per cent as the maximum rate. The shark charged forty to fifty per cent.

Losses on that class of loans were heavy. Nobody would do the business at a seven per cent rate. So the proper course was to legitimatize a much higher rate. By removing the risk involved in violating the usury law, and putting the business on a lawful basis, that course did bring down interest rates for borrowers who had formerly patronized loan sharks; but all open-minded students of the subject realized that any attempt to enforce the seven per cent rate would be futile.

Fighting for Latin America

WHY WE CAN'T CARRY THE GERMAN TRADE TRENCHES

By Roger W. Babson

"WHY do you interview only presidents, and the like?" said an American engineer to me in Peru when I left him to keep an appointment with President Benavides. "You don't get much that is worth while from such people. They are too politic—afraid of hurting your feelings as well as offending their own countrymen. Interviews with presidents and other men in political positions are no good. If you really want to know what the people of South America think of the people of North America," continued he, "get out into the highways and byways, and talk with the people themselves; then you'll get something worth while."

The more I thought over this advice the more it appealed to me. From that day I began to talk with the people themselves; and this article tells what I learned. It is not very pleasant reading, I'll admit; but sometimes our critics are our best friends.

The first talk I had was with the buyer in a large furnishing store at Lima, Peru. He gave me quite a lecture and concluded with these words:

"Are your manufacturers in the United States absolutely crazy? Do they hope to have your salesmen, in one week, secure from us Peruvians trade that England and Germany have been forty years obtaining? Yet only yesterday I asked a representative of a large Chicago firm how he was getting on, and he replied: 'I've been here now nearly a week and have secured only two orders. There is nothing here in Peru! This town is too slow for me! I'm going to get out on the next boat.' Now let me ask you what that Chicago firm would have thought of us if it had been serving us for forty years and we had suddenly thrown it over on the first call of a fresh, strange salesman, whose principal ability seemed to consist of consuming highballs and cracking jokes on our people!"

The Yankee as South America Sees Him

AFTER leaving Lima, the inland capital of Peru, I went to Callao, to embark for Mollendo, Arica and Antofagasta. I had talks there with several men; but I shall repeat here only one of their many suggestions. It was from a young commission merchant. Said he:

"When reaching home please suggest to your friends who are shipping goods down here that they send for some young Peruvian chaps to enter their employ. We are absolutely tired of writing your people to pack your goods in small, strong cases. Our instructions are followed for a few weeks and then things are just as bad as ever. Do the concerns in the United States continually change shippers or are these shippers void of memory? We have the same trouble regarding colors. As you know, the Peruvian women wear much black and our consumption of black goods is very large; but this does not mean that we run to other sober colors. Because we order a large quantity of black goods is no reason why a New England jobber should refuse to supply reds, yellows and greens when we specifically order them; and yet such things are continually happening!

"About two months ago I ordered several pieces of black goods, with a supplemental order of greens, urging that the shipment be rushed. Imagine my disgust last week to get a letter asking whether I did not mean grays instead of greens. Now anyone acquainted with the Peruvians knows that they wear little gray. Either they are in mourning and want black, or else they are not in mourning and want the brightest colors. If each of these concerns could have a Peruvian boy in its export department a large number of such mistakes could be avoided. Many of our well-to-do people have boys they would gladly send to your country for the experience if you would see that they were looked after.

"Speaking of colors, let me say that a fortune awaits some enterprising Yankee who will buy up secondhand automobiles in your country, repaint them red, green or yellow, and ship them down here."

I was much disappointed in Mollendo. The only person I found there to talk with, outside of a few poor storekeepers, was a U. S. A. consular agent—who, by the way, is an Englishman. Though he was a splendid fellow and in charge of the cable office at this point, it seems a pity that it is necessary to have an Englishman attend to our affairs in any South American port. Out of one hundred million people in this country, certainly we ought to be able to find enough good men to serve as consular agents in the Latin-American cities.

Antofagasta is a good, live town, and there I met an engineer. I like engineers, whatever their nationality, for they are trained to tell the truth and do not attempt to make black look like white. I certainly found a good, frank one here in this port, and this is the gist of his comments:

"You North Americans are the most gullible people that I have ever met! You come to South America to study trade opportunities. You bring letters of introduction from your big city banks to their correspondents here. These correspondents are either the English or the German banks. You fellows take a taxi from the boat to the banks, courteously present your letters, and begin to inquire of your worst competitors regarding the trade opportunities in South America! These Englishmen and Germans are estimable people—they give you cigars, cash your checks, and even invite you for an automobile drive; but they do not tell you the truth about trade opportunities for North Americans in South America.

"You feel complimented when they take you to the club for luncheon. At the club they introduce you only to the chronic kickers. Moreover, they probably egg them on, so that even they appear at their very worst.

"As a result of this misinformation, you conclude that there are no opportunities on the West Coast of South America. Why don't you go to one of our large native banks and at least hear our side? I'll tell you the reason: It is because you cannot speak Spanish and must depend on what your foreign competitors tell you! You certainly are a gullible lot!"

After leaving Antofagasta, my next port of call was Valparaiso, where I had talks with several commission merchants and the local representative of one of the largest corporations of the United States. Like other representatives of large interests, this man was trained to listen well and say little; but he did make the following statement, which should be printed in large type and emphasized on every occasion when Latin-American affairs are discussed.

"Please tell your people," he said, "that they should either have their own representatives in South America or else establish reliable and friendly commission houses operated by citizens of the United States. Not only are nearly all the commission houses here in the hands of Germans and other foreigners, but your own exporters in New York are mostly Germans!"

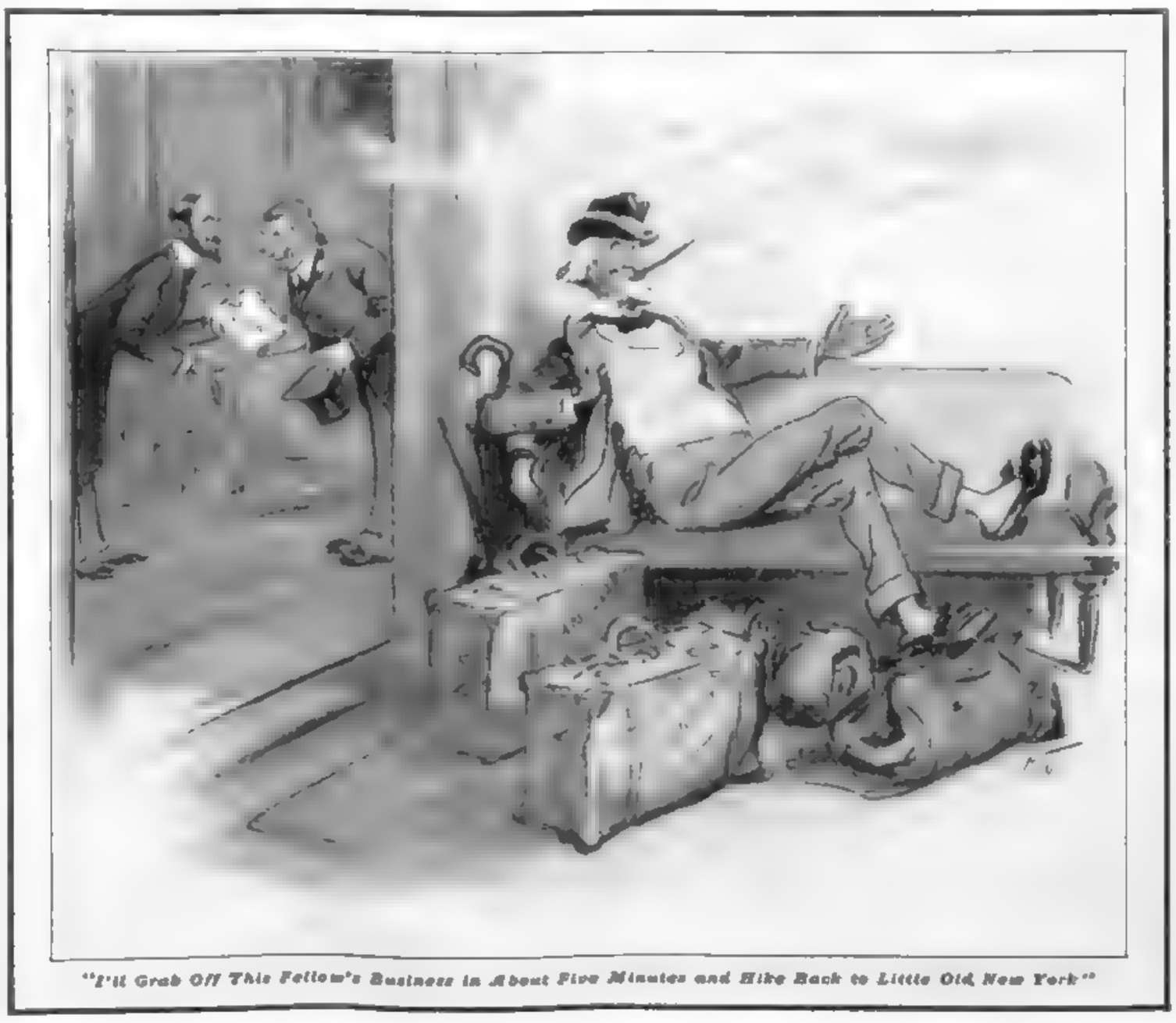
From Valparaiso I took the train to Santiago, the capital of Chile, which is nearly one hundred miles inland. Here I met a number of persons; but perhaps the frankest one was a steamship agent, who had an office in one of the large arcades in Santiago. I met him several times. He is a royal good fellow and has traveled extensively, not only through Latin America but through North America as well. As I was about to leave and embark for a long trip through the Strait of Magellan to Buenos Aires, he gave me this parting shot:

Going After Business in a Day Coach

"WELL, I suppose you know all about Chile. You have given a whole week to our country and have visited four of our cities! I hear you are too hurried to make one visit to the fifteen hundred miles of fertile country we have south of Santiago! But you are no worse than the salesmen that manufacturers in the United States are continually sending down here. They visit three or four of our principal cities and then fly over the Andes from Santiago to Buenos Aires. Before your countrymen can hope to secure much more trade from down here they should study South American geography. Our most rapidly growing cities your salesmen never go to, because parlor cars do not run there. The English and German salesmen do not wait for parlor cars or good hotels. They not only visit these growing southern towns but they remain long enough to learn to understand the people and secure their friendship. You North Americans think the only factors to secure trade are price and quality. This idea is a great mistake when applied to South Americans. Friendship and credit we consider also. And we value courtesy, too, very highly."

Speaking of the Strait of Magellan, let me tell you they have a live little town down there called Punta Arenas. Though one can almost see the South Pole with a telescope from the top of the leading bank building of Punta Arenas, it is a prosperous, well-built and attractive city. I really think there is more brains per capita in Punta Arenas than in any Latin-American city I ever visited, though this may be due to the fact that most of the inhabitants are Germans or Englishmen. Anyhow, here is a suggestion from the head of a large department store in that city:

"When you get back to the States please tell your readers that, though we live in the most southerly city in the world, we are not wild Indians. We not only want to buy goods but we want first-class goods. Though the German goods are lowest in price, they are not good



"I'll Grab Off This Fellow's Business in About Five Minutes and Hike Back to Little Old New York"

(Continued on Page 26)

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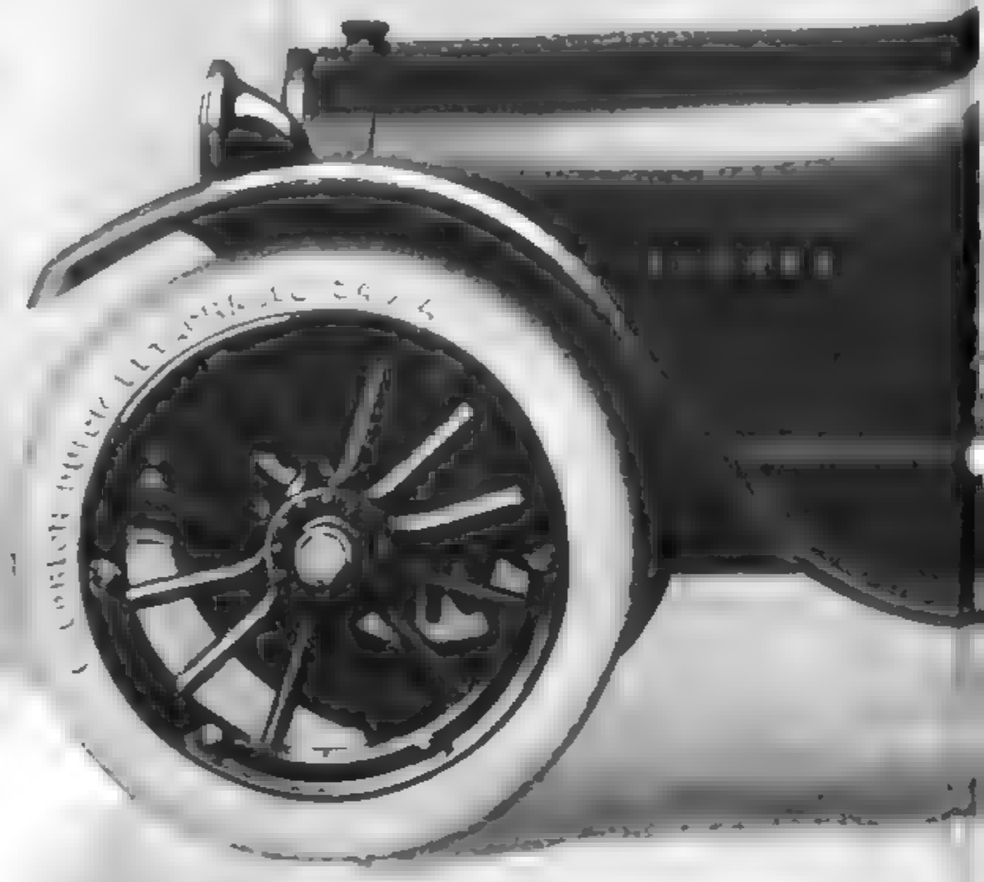

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Liggett & Myers Tobacco Co.

Duke's Mixture

Granulated Tobacco

5¢

FIGHTING FOR LATIN AMERICA

(Continued from Page 23)

enough for us. Whether buying automobiles, typewriters, sewing machines, shoes or hardware, our customers want the very best. Moreover, if the U. S. A. manufacturers will send their best quality of goods to South America, and compete for quality instead of for price, they will win a great victory in the end. Likewise, though the Germans have been getting the trade, owing to their low prices, the label Made in Germany is beginning to stand for cheap quality. The manufacturers and the labor unions of the United States have a great opportunity for building up a tremendous South American trade by simply insisting that U. S. A. be stamped only on goods of quality."

This statement reminds me of something Mr. Guggenheim told me on his way back from Chile, where he had been to see the largest copper mine in the world, located in Chile, east of Antofagasta. This great plant, as well as that of the Braden Copper Company, just south of Santiago, is controlled by the Guggenheims. As such mining plants are in the mountains, away from civilization, it is necessary for the companies to operate stores at which the men can trade. Concerning one of these stores Mr. Guggenheim said to me:

"On first entering the store I was astonished at the fine stock of goods displayed there. I was on the point of asking the manager why he carried such luxuries away up there in the mountains, when two barefooted workmen came in. The first asked for a pair of shoes and the storekeeper showed him some workingmen's shoes. 'I don't want shoes to work in,' said the miner; 'I work in my bare feet. I want the shoes to wear!' Then the storekeeper showed a very good shoe, such as he himself wore; but the miner was looking for something still better. He was then offered some expensive American shoes, selling at ten dollars, gold, a pair, and they proved just what he wanted. The sale was quickly made and the miner went away happy.

"The other workman inquired for soap, and he was shown a well-known New York brand, which retails in Chile for about twenty cents a cake. This did not suit at all, and he was then shown a cake of famous English soap, selling somewhat higher. The workman smelled of this and, turning up his nose, said: 'I want something that smells good, like the violets that grow in valleys. Show me your best soap.' The storekeeper then went to the show case and took out some expensive Parisian soap, selling at nearly one dollar a cake. This was precisely what the miner wanted. He gave nearly his entire day's wages for this cake of soap and happily went on his way."

A Land of Millionaires

It was a cold, stormy four days' sail from Punta Arenas to Buenos Aires, the wonder city of the Western Hemisphere, with a population of about a million and a half. The bankers and lawyers there apparently were all millionaires, and even the ranchmen, dentists and laundry owners were rated likewise. I cannot vouch from personal experience that the price for extracting a tooth is twenty dollars, but I can say that I paid forty-four cents in gold for the laundering of an undershirt for which I paid only fifty cents at a department store in good old Boston; and that they charged ten cents apiece for washing collars which I had bought for twelve and a half cents here in the United States.

Following is the gist of three interviews I had with the poorest and humblest people I could find in Buenos Aires—a retired banker, a prominent lawyer, and a ranchman, who was also a millionaire. Down there they feel that a farm is not worthy of the name unless it contains from forty to fifty thousand acres, with half of it under alfalfa.

"Before your people from the States can hope to secure much more business down here," the banker said, "you must either change your method of doing business or else start banks in South America. Your manufacturers are in the habit of simply manufacturing; then they send their customer round the corner to get his banking done. This works very well in a country like yours, with over twenty thousand banks, where there is sure to be a bank round every corner. Here in South America business is done in a different way. The great English, German and French manufacturers have been both merchants and bankers. They have sold us the goods and in addition have given us banking facilities to enable us to buy the goods.

"It makes us tired down here to have you continually talking about our demand for long credits. We don't ask so much credit as do your customers in the States. Moreover, we are much more careful to meet our drafts and other obligations when due than are your customers to pay their notes at your home banks. The difference is right here: Assume that you have a mill in Lawrence, Massachusetts, and that I am a Boston jobber to whom you desire to sell goods. I ask you what your terms are and you tell me: 'Thirty days.' I reply that I cannot turn over the goods in thirty days; that it will take me six months. Do you refuse to sell me? No! You send me to the National Woolen Bank, of Boston, of which you are a director, and they lend me for six months the money necessary to buy your goods and pay you within thirty days! To do business down here you must start banks that will do for us in Buenos Aires what your Boston banks do for your customers in Boston. Moreover, let me tell you that it very much offends us to be told that our credit is not worthy of it. We don't need North American banks simply to do a foreign exchange business. We want them to finance our purchases of North American goods."

Pointers on Foreign Trade

"Of course the greatest profit to you would be to follow the English and German system and allow us the credit direct, and add to your price accordingly. Whichever method you prefer would be satisfactory to us—only don't make the mistake of thinking that the English and Germans do not charge for extending such credit. Moreover, with money rates from twelve to eighteen per cent, you can be sure that our merchants are willing to pay considerably more for goods with long credit. Of course we dare not offer you a higher price for fear you'll be afraid to sell us at all."

The lawyer summed up the situation as follows: "Your North American merchants will get a great surprise when this war is over. Why, their representatives down here talk as if England, Germany and France were gone forever, and their day in South America were ended! That we are now desirous of buying goods of you is due only to a temporary condition. Owing to the lack of shipping it is now impossible for us to get goods from Germany, and quite difficult for us to secure them from France or England. Hence we turn to your North American manufacturers in sheer desperation. Unless, however, there is a great change in your attitude between now and the ending of the war, we'll drop you as soon as shipping with Europe opens up again.

"You see, the English and Germans understand foreign trade. It is an art with them, the same as the killing of hogs and the making of shoes is an art with the people of your country. The Germans even have separate colleges to train men for foreign trading; while the English inherit a love for oversea commerce. Your people have been so surrounded by natural resources and high tariffs that they have become actually stupid. Now we buy of you irrespective of your poor service; but we all long for the day when we can again deal with English and German firms, who will both try to please us and also finance our purchases.

"Assume that Thomas A. Edison and one of his workmen should be stripped of everything and dropped without a penny on a strange island, where neither had ever been heard of before. Could such misfortune keep Edison down? Wouldn't he soon become a great man on the island and the other chap again become his employee? It is the same with nations. Strip Germany of every material thing and she'll come back again—with as great efficiency as ever. Take it from me that the competition for South American trade will be even greater after the war than it was before, and that your North American manufacturers will have a hard time to hold what they have now got."

The ranchman was equally frank in expressing his opinion. "I have just read an article in a New York magazine," he said,

"telling of the great pioneer work that has been done in South America by the Standard Oil Company, the Singer Sewing Machine Company, and others. The article states that these concerns have been quietly doing business here for years and deserve great credit; that, instead of criticizing North American manufacturers for neglecting South American trade, we should praise them for their great industry and perseverance.

"Let me call your attention to the fact that all such concerns from the United States have what practically amount to monopolies in their lines. The monopoly may come through the control of transportation or of patents, or of some other exclusive feature; but it is a monopoly, nevertheless. Such concerns are not depending on their energy and efficiency to get the business, but on some unseen support; in fact, I know of no product in which your people have built up a trade in South America in equal competition with merchants of other nations."

After leaving Buenos Aires and getting rested I next reached the port of Santos in Southern Brazil and took the train for São Paulo. Though here I still ran against a few millionaires, I was able to come down again to earth and get in touch with real folks once more. São Paulo is quite a manufacturing center and I had several talks with men connected with these plants. For the most part they told the same story, which ran as follows:

"As your people in the United States buy so much of our coffee, they would have a wonderful opportunity to secure our trade in return if they knew how to take advantage of it. Take the question of samples, for instance: About six weeks ago I sent to a New England manufacturer for a sample of his sheepskins. Imagine my surprise when I received a bill therefor. If he had asked me to return them that would have been all right, though very unusual; but to be sent a bill was too much! I'm surprised he did not send them with draft attached!

"The Germans have not only given us all the samples we want, but they buy our goods and take samples of them back to Germany to show the German manufacturers what we have to sell. Customs officers have told me that the samples the Germans take home exceed what they bring to us; in fact they do not need to use samples at all, for they can point to our own goods and say: 'We can deliver these same goods to you here in your store, freight, duties, and so on, fully paid, for so many dollars a gross.' Your salesmen are not clever enough to figure this way. They will give us a price for New York delivery and leave us to figure freight, duties, cartage, insurance, exchange, and so on. The result is that we never take the trouble to figure all this out, but buy the goods of Germany instead."

Ideas That are Too Up-to-Date

"We made arrangements in 1903 or 1904 to buy goods of a New York concern that represented several large factories manufacturing machinery, hardware, and so on. At first we gave them only two or three trial orders; but we liked the goods so much that we gave up purchasing from Europe, with the idea of making all purchases from your country. We just had your line well introduced when we suddenly received word that, 'Owing to the increased home demand we shall be unable to fill any more orders for at least six months.' When business was dull they came here to sell their surplus; but as soon as the demand in the States revived we were cut off! As our foreign European connections had been broken it was very awkward for us to pick them up again, especially at a time when they likewise were very busy. No; never again will I be caught that way. I much prefer to deal with English, Belgian and German firms, who are absolutely dependent on export business and who are anxious to retain it. I never again will depend on concerns in the United States, who come here only when business is dull to sell us the surplus."

From São Paulo I went overland to Rio de Janeiro, the great show city of the Western Hemisphere. Just as all the people of Buenos Aires I met were introduced to me as millionaires, those I met in Rio de Janeiro were introduced as doctors, professors, and the Honorable Mr. So-and-So. Rio de Janeiro is the most beautiful city I have ever visited; but I think the principal industry must be politics and the chief product politicians. At least, almost everybody I met there, who was not a good U. S. A. citizen, seemed to derive an income, directly or indirectly, from the government. As the Federal Government of Brazil was rather hard up when I was there, Rio de Janeiro was experiencing a great business depression. The proprietor of a celebrated jewelry store said to me: "You can always judge business conditions in Rio by the market for our government bonds. When we can sell bonds, business is great; but when we can't, it is pretty poor." However, I got some splendid suggestions from the good people I met in that city. For instance, the superintendent of a department store passed along this suggestion:

"You wonder why it is that we Latin Americans shun new ideas and products, when you people of the North are inclined to favor a thing just because it is new. Perhaps we are wrong and you are right. The fact, however, exists that it is very difficult to introduce anything new here. Men coming from more up-to-date countries are continually asking why we do this or don't do the other, and suggesting that somebody could make a lot of money by introducing here the more modern method. Let me tell you that nearly every such idea has been tried, but has failed to make money. Milkmen in Brazil drive the cows about town and milk them at each customer's door because their customers demand such service. The people want to be sure the milk is fresh, and they are willing to pay more to have it delivered in this way, which appears quaint and out of date to you."

A humble bank clerk timorously ventured this statement:

"You North American friends make a mistake by letting our government officials blackmail you. It is true that our countries are full of graft; but this condition of affairs is due largely to the foreigners who have paid this graft. Many of our government employees are young and weak. The English, Germans, French, and others, desiring concessions of various kinds, have tempted and ruined them. We natives never give graft unless compelled to when competing with foreigners."

What We Can Buy in South America

"Tell your countrymen that they have a great opportunity to redeem themselves, and us also, by refusing to pay graft of any kind to our officials or to our press. None of us Brazilians like it. Everybody suffers from it. If you North Americans will unite in refusing to be a party to it we natives will rally to your support."

A bright real-estate agent made this remark, which is worthy of repetition:

"North Americans make a mistake in studying only opportunities to sell. The great opportunities in South America today are opportunities to buy. Not only can much money be made by exporting known products, such as rubber, cacao, dyewoods, manioc, yerba maté, and so on, but there must be many unknown products of great wealth to be found in Brazil. Great opportunities here await the chemists, mineralogists and botanists who will study our forests. Probably there are many other products here as valuable and as useful as rubber, but to-day they are unknown.

"Though the jungle is hard to penetrate, yet it is not so disagreeable as it is pictured. It is always cool here in the breeze and shade, and you will often see people on one side of the street in furs while on the other side people are walking in bare feet. As machinery and the gasoline motor are applied to the cultivation of cotton, cacao, and so on, the money-making opportunities of raising products here for export will be unlimited. Don't look only for opportunities to sell, but consider opportunities to produce and to buy."

It usually takes a newspaper man to get right down to brass tacks and tell the whole truth. The following is what the editor of a Rio de Janeiro paper said to me at luncheon the day before I left:

"We are constantly amused here to read the speeches made by New York and Chicago bankers pleading for more coöperation between banks in North America and banks in South America. These remarks show great ignorance on the part of United States bankers.

"Before there can be any such interchange as they suggest, there must first be established coöperation among the banks of South America. Even the banks of Brazil

MOON
MOON
$ 1195
FULLY EQUIPPED
The New 1916
MOON
Six Thirty
A 118-inch wheelbase, man-size six-cylinder car completely equipped for $1195. Everything else about the car is as man-size as the wheelbase. New 30 H-P Continental-Moon Motor—3¼ x 4½, cast en-bloc with new type removable cylinder heads.
New 1916 Delco starting, lighting and ignition system with new switch having ammeter on dash.
New convex-side Tumble-Home Body design. Car color Brewster Green, upholstered in genuine tan Spanish leather.
Left-hand drive and center control. Stewart patent vacuum gasoline feed system. Crown fenders. Stewart speedometer. Silk mohair one-man type top. Gasoline tank on rear.
We could have shortened the wheelbase—substituted a cheap motor, used imitation or dyed black leather, cut down on comfort and quality features and cheapened our price $200. But then we'd have been making a car to meet a price instead of to make Moon friends.
The New Six-40
Bigger and more luxurious than ever—seven passenger—124-inch wheelbase. Powerful New Continental-Moon Motor New 1916 Delco System. Same general specifications as the Six-30, only it s a larger car. And the same good reasons why the price is more than justified.
See these two cars
Our dealer in your town will show them and demonstrate them.
DEALERS—A WORD—If you're not already a Moon dealer you must not delay writing us, as live men are snapping up new territory at a great rate. Write and learn about our co-operative dealer service.
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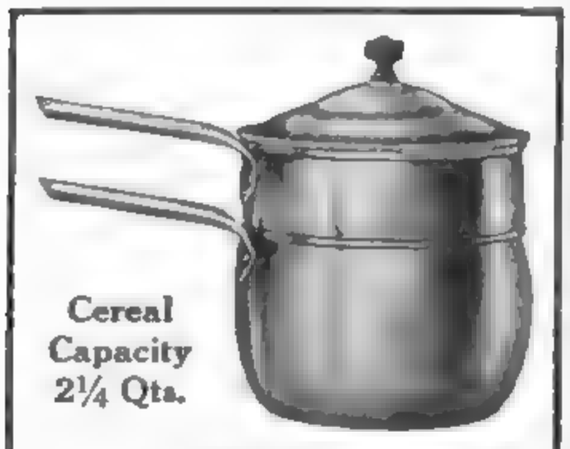
The 25-cent package of Quaker Oats is nearly three times larger than the 10-cent size. By saving in packing it offers more for your money.



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We have this made for users of Quaker Oats. It is pure aluminum, large and extra-heavy. It cooks the flakes perfectly, while retaining all the flavor and aroma.

Send us our trademark—the picture of the Quaker—from 50c worth of Quaker Oats. Send one dollar with them and we will send this Double Cooker by parcel post.

This is one of our efforts to make this dish the dainty of dainties in every home.

This present cooker offer applies only to the United States.

Address The Quaker Oats Company
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Quaker Oats

Vim-Food Made Exquisite

Quaker Oats contains only the large, luscious, fragrant flakes. Two-thirds of the oats are discarded in making it. That's one secret of this wondrous flavor.

Wherever you go, the world over, Quaker Oats will be found on the tables of connoisseurs. Yet every American home can get it at no extra price.

Don't be careless in a food like this. The love of oats—the supreme energy food—may affect one's whole career. Get Quaker Oats and cook it in this ideal way.

10c and 25c per package
Except in Far West and South

(971)

will not trust one another. The banks of Rio de Janeiro will not accept one another's checks, even for deposit, until they are certified! This is why no clearing house exists in Rio de Janeiro. As you know, I am an officer of one of the most progressive banks in Rio de Janeiro; but if somebody should pay you with a check drawn on any other bank and you should send that check here for deposit, I would first want it certified. This is another reason why the U. S. A. bankers should get together and create a great Bank of North America, with branches all over South America.

"The greatest opportunity for South American trade is for manufacturers of specialties with large profits. All such who have come intelligently for our trade have made money. The unfortunate ones are those who sell staple products with a small margin of profit. Such manufacturers cannot give terms unless able to ask higher prices, or unless they use South America only for dumping surplus goods. This, of course, applies only to present profits. Though the manufacturer of staple products might be unable to make a profit on South American business at present, he may be laying the foundation for a large business later. Those who lay the foundation now will be the first to reap the profits. Some of your people object to our market because we demand a different style of goods from that which they now make. What if we do?"

Advice From Our Southern Cousins

"You North Americans are greatly handicapped by your manners. You probably mean well; but you often appear very indifferent and rude. For instance, you know it is our custom to remove our hats when a funeral goes by, even though it may be only the funeral of some poor little child. Well, I was standing on the Avenida one day with a party of men. There were four Englishmen, three Frenchmen, a German, an Italian and an American in the group. Every one of the group removed his hat except your fellow citizen. He stolidly stood by and gave no sign of recognition. You should be more careful about your manners when in Latin America.

"The greatest handicap manufacturers of your United States have here in South America is the fact that our people have no confidence in your Government at Washington. I am not criticizing the present Administration, as I think President Wilson has done much to bring about a more friendly feeling between the Americas. We were especially pleased at the A B C Conference on Mexico. What queers you among our people is the idea our people have that you Americans are great bluffers. You talk big and fight with your mouth and pen; but you never go farther. Your Government sends notes to other governments; but apparently you dare not send a battleship or recommend a practical way out of the difficulty.

"Our people are like children. If you continually threaten a child and argue with it, but go no farther, you soon lose the respect of the child. This is the way you have lost the respect of Latin America. This is why you cannot safely invest money here or extend credits. Our people are afraid to cheat an Englishman or a German, but have no fear to cheat you Americans. They believe that your Government will not back up your people to secure justice. The first thing your manufacturers should do is to rectify this fundamental difficulty. Either see that your own people receive justice or else get out."

The last thing I did before leaving Rio de Janeiro was to go to a money-changer and get some express checks cashed. Much to my surprise I found this fellow to be a good U. S. A. citizen; and we had quite a confidential talk. During the conversation a bystander spoke up and made this statement, which I simply pass on for what it is worth:

"You North Americans have made a mistake in representing yourselves to have more money than you really have; in fact most of your financial operations in South America have been unfortunate. You are too anxious for quick profits. You are more interested in selling out than in standing by and working the property. Even the valuable traction, light and power properties you have here are suffering from the large capitalization you have given them. You have nearly drowned them in water.

"Do you know that even the natives refer to the street cars as bonds instead of trains? Ask a native when the next train or street car is due and he may not understand you; but ask him when the next bond is due and he will answer at once. This, I suppose, is due to the fact that they have heard the North Americans down here talk more about the securities of the tramway company than about the track or cars."

On my way to the steamer I met a citizen of our own country who has been traveling for a number of years throughout Latin America. He asked whether we were going to Pernambuco and I replied that we were not. He followed me to the wharf, and these were his parting words:

"When you return to Boston tell your friends to study Pernambuco. A glance at the map shows that this is the nearest port to England, Germany, France—or, in fact, any other part of Europe. Furthermore, it is only three or four days from the West Coast of Africa. What, however, should interest your people most about Pernambuco is the fact that it is the first port at which steamers from North America will naturally touch on their route south, and the last port of all on their route north.

"Pernambuco is also the port for a very rich country. Even the Province of Pernambuco is very rich of itself. Up to the present time this city has been greatly handicapped by bad landing facilities. A bar extends outside, on which great breakers roll. Hence ships load and unload quite a distance from shore. For instance, to unload passengers at Pernambuco a boom and derrick are needed. When I was there last week it was comparatively calm; but it was necessary for me to sit in a basket and be hoisted up in the air, and then lowered over the side of the ship into a small boat. Harbor improvements, however, are already in process and it will not be long before Pernambuco will become well-known and important."

As we entered the Amazon River I met on the steamer a salesman who was traveling through Latin America. Heretofore I have quoted only native Latin Americans, but I will make an exception in this case. He said:

"It is all very well to talk about the great opportunities of the Tropics. Some day—a hundred or more years hence—they may exist; but not to-day. The warm, humid climate of Northern Brazil takes the ambition out of people. Even when a good active Yankee comes down here he soon becomes as lazy as the rest of us. It is a mistake for you North Americans to try to do much here—especially those of you who are light-complexioned and who do not tan.

"The difference between the climatic effects of Northern and Southern Brazil has been well illustrated to me during the past thirty days. Two weeks ago I was in São Paulo, Southern Brazil, and I saw a very little boy come into town on a great big horse, bareback. Just before reaching the city he dropped his whip. As I saw him dismount I wondered how he would ever get on again. I ordered my chauffeur to stop while I watched. The little boy picked up the whip and looked about. There was not a stone or a stump anywhere. Only prairies could be seen in every direction. Was he stuck? Not much; he simply shinned up one of the horse's front legs as one would shin up a pole, grabbing the horse's mane to help himself along. In less than a minute he was back again on the animal's back.

"Contrasting with this, I last week heard of a big boy here in Northern Brazil who waited for an hour alongside the road for somebody to come by and help him up on a much smaller horse! There certainly is something about the climate here in the Tropics that takes the ginger out of all of us. Did you ever hear of a great inventor, artist, writer, or any other man of real note, who did his work in the Tropics?

"The citizens of North America make a big mistake in permitting the Europeans to control the press of South America. Practically all our leading journals are directly or indirectly controlled by English or European capital. Even those of us who are trying to treat the United States fairly are handicapped by the news services. This means that much of the U. S. A. news we get is doctored in Europe to appear unfavorable, while the European news is doctored to appear favorable. It certainly is very shortsighted of us not to insist that we have more direct news service from your country. Why, even the guidebooks on the United States we people here read have not been written and published by you people, but by your competitors."

Perhaps the most interesting stop of the trip was at Pará, Brazil, where I was royally entertained by our United States consul; and let me say here that all the men I have met who are engaged in our diplomatic and consular service are earnest and hard-working chaps. They are the true patriots out on the firing line and deserve our heartiest support in every possible way.

I cannot leave this last port of Pará without quoting from what somebody said to me at our consular office in that port:

"In this city of Pará there are at present only six citizens of the United States of America. Hence, we are lonesome and sometimes homesick. On the other hand, do you know that we always have a sort of dread whenever we hear of any new Yankees—as we all are called down here—coming to Pará! They almost always say something that takes us weeks to live down. Let me give you an illustration: Said a newcomer from New York the other day: 'Yes, this is a fine country. All that is needed is for some of us Americans to come down and run it.'

"Give credit to the Administration at Washington for sending out commercial attachés; give credit to the National City Bank of New York and their missionaries; give credit to the United States firms now doing business here, unprotected by patents—but please urge your friends, when they come down here, to be careful of their manners and words."

The Need of Foolproof Letters

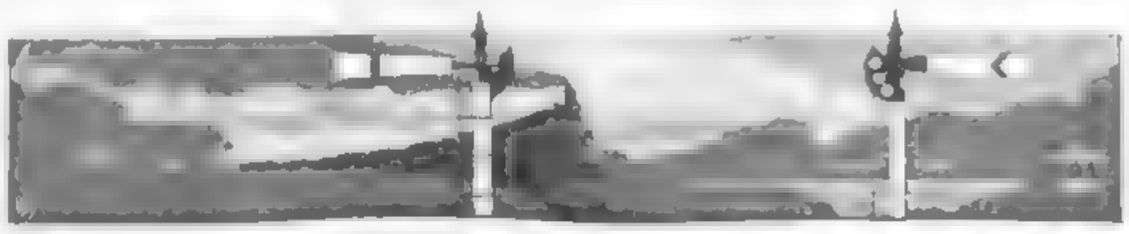
My acquaintance with Pará, however, was not limited to talks with these lonely U. S. A. citizens. I talked with some good native business men, and I will close by repeating a typical complaint:

"I wish your manufacturers could read English—let alone Spanish. It seems impossible to get anything through their heads. I write a letter to New York and order a different width of goods, for instance, from what I usually order. For fear the New Yorker will think it is a clerical error of my stenographer's, I have her write it the old way; then I cross it out in ink and write the new size above it in my own hand—and yet they continue to send the same old size!

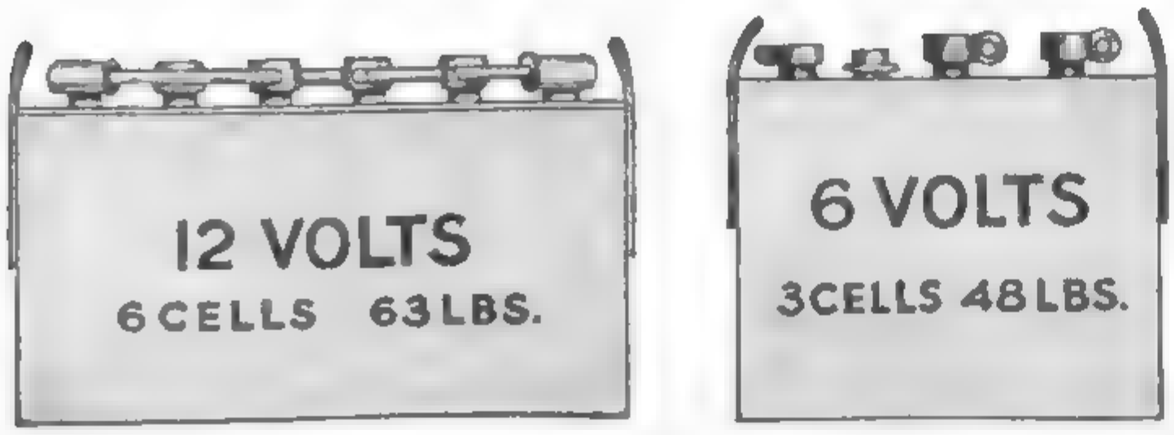
"With my cable code at the top of my letterhead, they still persist in asking me, 'What code are you using?' It takes long enough under the best conditions for us to receive goods, without wasting valuable time in writing and rewriting before shipping. You even send us samples and then forget what samples you sent. You quote prices and then fail to say whether the prices are wholesale or retail. Please tell your friends in the States to be specific and go into details, so that it will be unnecessary for us to cable back for further information. What we need is to discover some new form of foolproof letters!

"Why don't your manufacturers send their own men to South America without depending on agents? Commission houses do the best they can; but they cannot afford to spend time in pushing the sale of any line of goods. The average commission house gets only from five to ten per cent from your manufacturers on such export business. Hence, to make a go, these commission houses must get from two and a half to five per cent from the local buyers. This, you see, is very unsatisfactory all round. If you will send down your own men you can study the market. Why, the Germans are now even manufacturing for us antiques and relics! They have their own men, who learn what we want, who find out which of us to trust; and they get the business."

Many articles have been written by able men showing at great length what they think of the South American people. I came home with the determination to write this one article to show what the South American people think of us.



The Advantages of 6 volts



A Message to Ford Owners

When considering the purchase of electric equipment for your car, keep in mind the question of voltage, for it is an *important* question.

No doubt you know that the voltage of electric starting-lighting systems ranges from 6 volts to 24 volts.

The Gray & Davis system is designed on the 6 volt principle. You, as the owner or prospective owner of a car, are likely to ask—"Just what are the advantages of 6 volts?"

Low voltage means—

—a saving in battery weight
—a reduction in battery size
—three cells instead of a greater number
—reduced cost for battery maintenance
—simplicity in design.

WE believe that the 6-volt system is to be preferred. 7 years' experience in building electric equipment for motor cars emphasizes this belief. Over 200,000 automobiles (among them the high-priced cars) carry the Gray & Davis 6-volt system.

As nicety in design permits the efficient use of 6-volt pressure, it appears, in the judgment of our engineers, unnecessary to increase the size, weight and maintenance costs of the battery.

From an *electrical standpoint*, the Gray & Davis Ford system possesses other excellent features. For instance, our method of regulation keeps the battery fully charged but never *overcharged*. The charging "rate" diminishes as the battery becomes charged.

Each system is thoroughly inspected. After careful inspection the instruments are tested for hours to determine their reliability. This is followed by a fatigue or endurance test. Thus the owner is assured of *efficient performance* both from a mechanical and an electrical standpoint.

You, no doubt, will purchase a starting-lighting system for your Ford. Remember the advantages of the Gray & Davis system and particularly the 6-volt feature. It is wise to seek battery economy, light weight and minimum size.

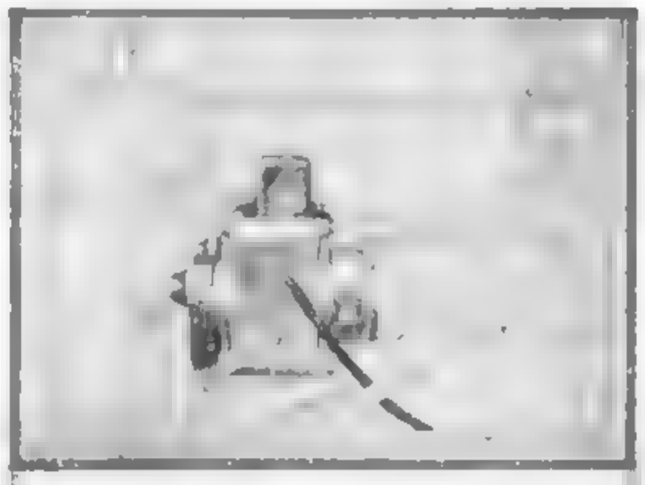
Our Ford equipment is now in operation on thousands of cars. It is giving excellent satisfaction. Undoubtedly the *6-volt feature* is one of the reasons.

The system is compact and simple. Can be installed on any Model T. Price $75, f. o. b. Boston.

HOW TO ORDER:—Any garage or automobile supply house can order for you through one of our Distributors listed at the right, or you can obtain the system from a Distributor. If you have the slightest difficulty in securing your equipment, write us and we will arrange delivery.

GRAY & DAVIS, Inc., BOSTON, MASS.

GRAY & DAVIS
STARTING-LIGHTING SYSTEM
FOR FORD CARS



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Utica, N. Y.	Utica Cycle Co.
Washington, D. C.	Miller Bros. Auto & Supply House

CANADA

Vancouver, B. C.	Walter C. Begg
Windsor, Ont.	The Universal Car Agency

FOREIGN

London, Eng.	G. Beaton & Son, Ltd.
Wellington, N. Z.	The Colonial Motor Co., Ltd.
Melbourne, Australia	Holland Proprietary, Ltd.
Paris, France	M. Perez & Co.
Frazar & Co., New York: Japanese Empire, Korea.	
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When is a cigarette Sensible?

A cigarette is not sensible for *you* if it leaves your taste and your smoke-hunger a little bit unsatisfied

—nor if it bothers your throat or tongue

—nor if it makes you "feel mean" after smoking your usual number.

None of these things will happen to you if you find (and *stick to*) the right cigarette.

But the cigarette that is right for one man may *not* be right for another. For instance, Fatimas may not just suit your individual taste—in spite of the fact that they are the best-selling cigarette costing over 5c.

Fatimas ARE *cool* and friendly to the throat and tongue—and they will NOT make you "feel mean" after smoking all you want.

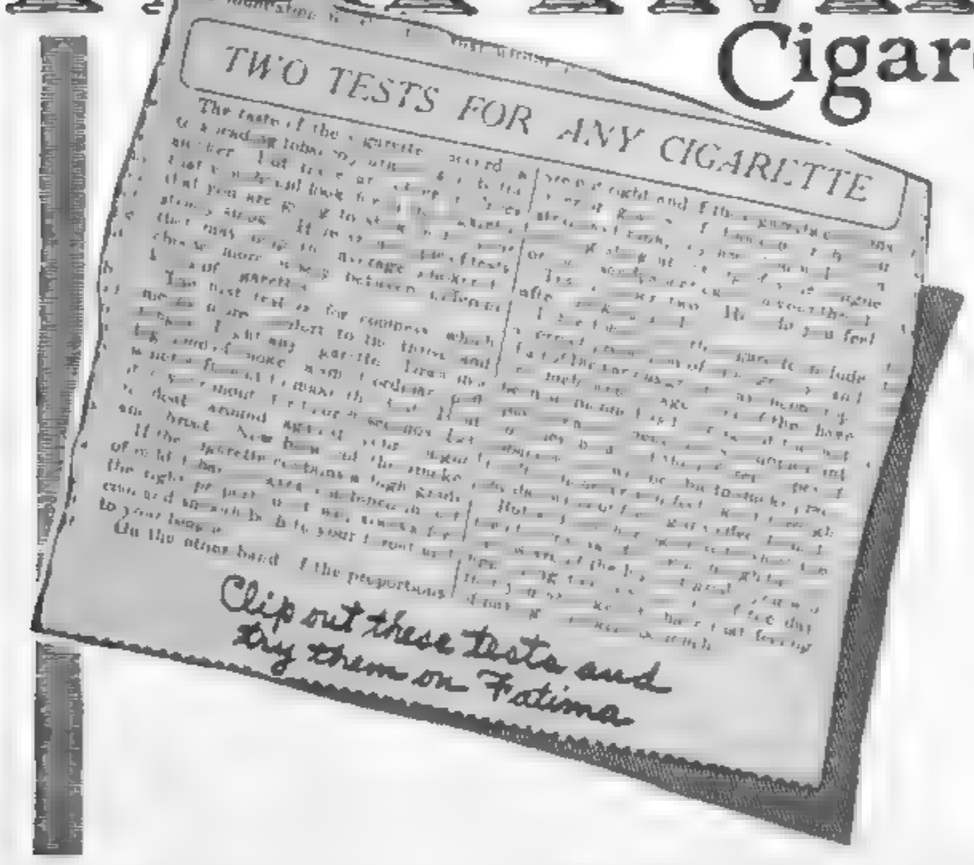
So they surely are *sensible* for you—except possibly for the taste.

And when it comes to that, it will be mighty strange if you don't like Fatima's taste—they couldn't sell so fast if the taste weren't *extra good*, could they?

Why not get Fatimas this very day and find out for yourself how *sensible* a cigarette can really be?

Liggett & Myers Tobacco Co.

FATIMA
THE TURKISH BLEND
Cigarette
20 for 15¢



$200 Not Enough for this Girl

MISS CATHERINE CRAYTON
of North Carolina

She writes: It is fun to be busy again with my pleasant out-door work. I have a growing pride both in my publications and in my ability to sell them.

SHE made $200 last summer, by looking after new and renewal subscription orders for *The Saturday Evening Post, The Ladies' Home Journal* and *The Country Gentleman*.

This summer, with the renewals of her last year's orders to build upon, she will earn over $400.

She has found the work easy and interesting. It has brought her into contact with people of culture and education. It occupies only her spare time, but it provides all the spending money she needs. Thousands of men and women are earning money by this plan.

If you have some spare time to sell, write for our booklet: "The Way To An Independent Income."

Agency Division, Box 978
THE CURTIS PUBLISHING COMPANY
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

ALIBI IKE

Concluded from Page 18.

"No," says Ike. "They ain't no more seats. They're all sold out."

"We can buy some off'n the scalpers," says Carey.

"I wouldn't if I was you," says Ike. "They say the show's rotten."

"What are you goin' for, then?" I ast.

"I didn't hear about it bein' rotten till I got the tickets," he says.

"Well," I says, "if you don't want to go I'll buy the tickets from you."

"No," says Ike, "I wouldn't want to cheat you. I'm stung and I'll just have to stand for it."

"What are you goin' to do with the girl, leave her here at the hotel?" I says.

"What girl?" says Ike.

"The girl you ett supper with," I says.

"Oh," he says, "we just happened to go into the dinin' room together, that's all. Cap wanted I should set down with 'em."

"I noticed," says Carey, "that she happened to be wearin' that rock you bought off'n Diamond Joe."

"Yes," says Ike. "I lent it to her for a wile."

"Did you lend her the new ring that goes with it?" I says.

"She had that already," says Ike. "She lost the set out of it."

"I wouldn't trust no strange girl with a rock o' mine," says Carey.

"Oh, I guess she's all right," Ike says. "Besides, I was tired o' the stone. When a girl asks you for somethin', what are you goin' to do?"

He started out toward the desk, but we flagged him.

"Wait a minute!" Carey says. "I got a bet with Sam here, and it's up to you to settle it."

"Well," says Ike, "make it snappy. My friend'll be here any minute."

"I bet," says Carey, "that you and that girl was engaged to be married."

"Nothin' to it," says Ike.

"Now look here," says Carey, "this is goin' to cost me real money if I lose. Cut out the alibi stuff and give it to us straight. Cap's wife just as good as told us you was roped."

Ike blushed like a kid.

"Well, boys," he says, "I may as well own up. You win, Carey."

"Yatta boy!" says Carey. "Congratulations!"

"You got a swell girl, Ike," I says.

"She's a peach," says Smitty.

"Well, I guess she's O. K.," says Ike. "I don't know much about girls."

"Didn't you never run round with 'em?" I says.

"Oh, yes, plenty of 'em," says Ike. "But I never seen none I'd fall for."

"That is, till you seen this one," says Carey.

"Well," says Ike, "this one's O. K., but I wasn't thinkin' about gettin' married yet a wile."

"Who done the askin', her?" says Carey.

"Oh, no," says Ike, "but sometimes a man don't know what he's gettin' into. Take a good-lookin' girl, and a man gen'ally almost always does about what she wants him to."

"They couldn't no girl lasso me unless I wanted to be lassoed," says Smitty.

"Oh, I don't know," says Ike. "When a fella gets to feelin' sorry for one of 'em it's all off."

Well, we left him gc after shakin' hands all round. But he didn't take Dolly to noshow that night. Some time wile we was talkin' she'd came into that other parlor and she'd stood there and heard us. I don't know how much she heard. But it was enough. Dolly and Cap's missus took the midnight train for New York. And from there Cap's wife sent her on her way back to Missouri.

She'd left the ring and a note for Ike with the clerk. But we didn't ask Ike if the note was from his friend in Fort Wayne, Texas.

VI

WHEN we'd came to Boston Ike was hittin' plain .397. When we got back home he'd fell off to pretty near nothin'. He hadn't drove one out o' the infield in any o' them other Eastern parks, and he didn't even give no excuse for it.

To show you how bad he was, he struck out three times in Brooklyn one day and never opened his trap when Cap ast him what was the matter. Before, if he'd whiffed oncet in a game he'd of wrote a book tellin' why.

Well, we dropped from first place to fifth in four weeks and we was still goin' down. I and Carey was about the only ones on the club that spoke to each other, and all as we did was remind ourself o' what a boner we'd pulled.

"It's goin' to beat us out o' the big money," says Carey.

"Yes," I says. "I don't want to knock my own ball club, but it looks like a one-man team, and when that one man's dauber's down we couldn't trim our whiskers."

"We ought to knew better," says Carey.

"Yes," I says, "but why should a man pull an alibi for bein' engaged to such a bearcat as she was?"

"He shouldn't," says Carey. "But I and you knowed he would or we'd never started talkin' to him about it. He wasn't no more ashamed o' the girl than I am of a regular base hit. But he just can't come clean on no subjec'."

Cap had the whole story, and I and Carey was as pop'lar with him as an umpire.

"What do you want me to do, Cap?" Carey'd say to him before goin' up to hit.

"Use your own judgment," Cap'd tell him. "We want to lose another game."

But finally, one night in Pittsburgh, Cap had a letter from his missus and he come to us with it.

"You fellas," he says, "is the ones that put us on the bum, and if you're sorry I think they's a chancet for you to make good. The old lady's out to St. Joe and she's been tryin' her hardest to fix things up. She's explained that Ike don't mean nothin' with his talk; I've wrote and explained that to Dolly, too. But the old lady says that Dolly says that she can't believe it. But Dolly's still stuck on this baby, and she's pinin' away just the same as Ike. And the old lady says she thinks if you two fellas would write to the girl and explain how you was always kiddin' with Ike and leadin' him on, and how the ball club was all shot to pieces since Ike quit hittin', and how he acted like he was goin' to kill himself, and this and that, she'd fall for it and maybe soften down. Dolly, the old lady says, would believe you before she'd believe I and the old lady, because she thinks it's her we're sorry for, and not him."

Well, I and Carey was only too glad to try and see what we could do. But it wasn't no snap. We wrote about eight letters before we got one that looked good. Then we give it to the stenographer and had it wrote out on a typewriter and both of us signed it.

It was Carey's idear that made the letter good. He stuck in somethin' about the world's serious money that our wives wasn't goin' to spend unless she took pity on a "boy who was so shy and modest that he was afraid to come right out and say that he had asked such a beautiful and handsome girl to become his bride."

That's prob'ly what got her, or maybe she couldn't of held out much longer anyway. It was four days after we sent the letter that Cap heard from his missus again. We was in Cincinnati.

"We've win," he says to us. "The old lady says that Doly says she'll give him another chancet. But the old lady says it won't do no good for Ike to write a letter. He'll have to go out there."

"Send him to-night," says Carey.

"I'll pay half his fare," I says.

"I'll pay the other half," says Carey.

"No," says Cap, "the club'll pay his expenses. I'll send him scoutin'."

"Are you goin' to send him to-night?"

"Sure," says Cap. "But I'm goin' to break the news to him right now. It's time we win a ball game."

So in the clubhouse, just before the game, Cap told him. And I certainly felt sorry for Rube Benton and Red Ames that afternoon! I and Carey was standin' in front o' the hotel that night when Ike come out with his suitcase.

"Sent home?" I says to him.

"No," he says, "I'm goin' scoutin'."

"Where to?" I says. "Fort Wayne?"

"No, not exactly," he says.

"Well," says Carey, "have a good time."

"I ain't lookin' for no good time," says Ike. "I says I was goin' scoutin'."

"Well, then," says Carey, "I hope you see somebody you like."

"And you better have a drink before you go," I says.

"Well," says Ike, "they claim it helps a cold."

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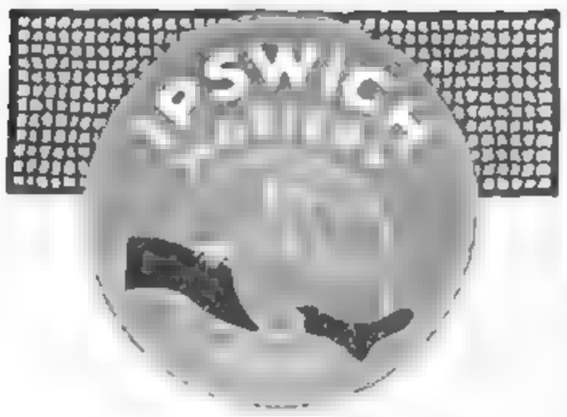

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GETTING WISE IN THE RUG BUSINESS

(Continued from Page 15)

eye of the lady of the house, and for which she is persuaded to pay a price far in excess of their intrinsic values. But the tragic part of it is, she hugs to her bosom the delusion that she has acquired a real work of art, whereas the thing is mediocre and can be duplicated, and she could have saved from five hundred to a thousand per cent by buying it from a reputable dealer.

Pennsylvania is a prolific field for the rug faker, who makes it a business to prey upon the susceptibilities of ladies of newly acquired wealth. It was a hot day in August when one of these gentlemen, wearing a fez, a coat as long as old Fagin's, and an air of Oriental suavity, appeared on the lawn of a great mansion where the lady of the house was entertaining a party of friends. He unrolled his pack and held up with slightly shaking hand, that the sheen of the piece might glint and twinkle in the glorious sunlight, two very mediocre silk rugs. The hostess at once fell in love with one of them and asked the price thereof. The Oriental gentleman named a price five times greater than he was willing to accept. Now my lady, having heard of the bargaining proclivities of the man from the East, thought to show how smart she was by boldly offering one-half of what the dealer asked. After several futile attempts to induce her to pay more, the swarthy gentleman, with tearful reluctance, accepted the offer.

Later the lady proudly showed me her wonderful find, and I confess I hated to disillusion her. The faker had asked $1200 for the rug and had accepted $600. I could have sold the piece at $300 and would have been glad of the profit on it at that figure.

Parasites of the Rug Trade

During an experience of twenty-five years in the rug business I have become acquainted with many devices for working on the sympathies of the public. There is the appeal of the poor Persian boy working his way through college; there are tales of rugs that have been stolen from mosques, sultans' palaces, or pashas' harems, and secretly brought to this country and offered for sale at ridiculously low figures; there are stories of rugs that have been sent from Europe and must be sold within a given time or returned; tales of notes to meet; fake history of every kind to excite the sympathy of the buyer and to induce him to buy.

Some years ago I ran across an excellent example of the poor Persian boy swindle. He was twenty-two years old, very good-looking, and heroically working his way through college on practically nothing at all. From the tale he told me, with many a quaver, I learned that his father at a heartbreaking sacrifice had sent him two or three old rug heirlooms that had been in the family for generations; but the heirloom in this case was a common Moussol rug that one could pick up at any department store for about $30. However, the poor Persian boy succeeded in selling this to one of my neighbors for $65, after assuring her that it was worth at least $150.

In addition to exciting human sympathy through financial stress or human need, there is also the great feat of exciting a profound interest in a rug by reason of its marvelous history. The idea of having one's home graced by a rug that has hung for ages in the dim light of some old mosque, or that has yielded to the soft feet of the sultan's favorite, lends an added charm in the eyes of the lady of the house—as well as an added value.

One method that is much in vogue is the pose of the foreign nobleman, assumed by one versatile man here in New York. He has been most successful in ingratiating himself with several rich men, to their sorrow. This fellow pretends to sell rugs from his own private collection, brought from his castle in France, or Germany, or where not. I met him on the Avenue recently and he said: "I'm through with small business. I'm not playing a piker game any more. Just a few rich suckers in a year are all I need—and the 'live ones' are in the West!"

There is much the same sort of Machiavellian intrigue in the rug game that there is in politics or finance. Here's a sample of it: A certain railroad magnate had taken a deep interest in a Persian boy and was helping him to get an education. One day it occurred to him that, as the boy came from the Orient, he must have a knowledge of rugs, so the railroad magnate commissioned this youth to buy a large piece for one of his rooms.

A certain crafty Armenian had taken note of the friendship that existed between the railroad man and the boy, and had cultivated the lad with the idea of turning this fact to his own advantage. It was to this Armenian that the boy, feeling small confidence in his own judgment, went for advice about the rug. Full of greed and cunning, the false friend hustled to New York and secured from a wholesale dealer a large Kirmanshah rug that on its way to America had been damaged by salt water. He got the rug at a special rate of $400, which in good condition would have sold wholesale at $800. The rug was shipped to Philadelphia and placed in the railroad man's house and he paid $4000 for it spot cash on the nail. The Persian boy, however, got only a nominal commission.

The effect of salt water upon a rug is to render it rotten and brittle, so that in the course of time it literally falls apart. As time went on the railroad man became worried at the condition of his rug and called in two or three experts, who discovered what was the cause. The tragedy of the whole thing was that the buyer, thinking the Persian boy an accomplice in the scheme to defraud him, withdrew his patronage and the boy was cast upon his own resources again. These are the little fellows, the parasites of the rug trade, who deserve only a word in passing. But even their crude methods of deception could not avail if the art sense of our people had been developed.

To wander on Fifth Avenue with your pocket full of money and with no knowledge of what you are buying is an open invitation for the schemes and fakes of the less reputable dealers.

When a certain millionaire comes to town for the art season it means half a million dollars to the dealers. It is a well-known fact that he loves to buy wholesale. His wife once told me that they had at home two vaults full of paintings that it was impossible to exhibit.

So when this gentleman comes to town the fakers are all looking for him. The word is passed and the rug sharps descend upon him like birds of prey, and I must confess that ordinary birds of prey are birds of paradise compared with these fellows. This particular buyer loves to go into a shop and root round all by himself, and he invariably "finds" something in some corner or drawer that the dealer has forgotten all about—just as if it hadn't been planted there!

The Practice of Baksheesh

Once I visited this millionaire's gallery and was so incensed at what I saw there that I wrote him a letter saying that though I didn't dispute his legal right to display anything he chose, I did dispute his moral right to exhibit as art the rugs that I saw in his house. He had sixty-five pieces there, of which only three had art merit. The other sixty-two were washed, or doctored; they were modern, mediocre, duplicatable. For these rugs this millionaire had paid all kinds of prices in excess of their legitimate commercial values. I should be just as well satisfied with a good domestic rug made up in Massachusetts. But this is not the worst of it: to exhibit such things as art is an injustice to the public, an injustice to art itself and to the Orient.

There has sprung up in the rug business the practice of getting goods on memorandum, which, through its widespread ramifications, is more prolific of extortion than any other feature of this trade. Getting a rug on memorandum is the same thing as my getting a rug on approval for your approval, I being a dealer and you being a prospective customer. When four or five people are involved in a rug transaction—or even three or four—each one scheming to make a profit; the ultimate buyer is apt to get a very expensive article.

Here is a case in point that I know of: A certain decorator in New York, whom we shall call A, went to a friend of his in the rug business, whom we shall call B, and asked him if he knew where he could get a fine rug of a certain size. B went to C and made inquiries for such a rug for A. C told B he knew just where the rug could be got and would have it ready for inspection in the course of a day or so. C started to scour the market, when D called him up and told him that he had a rug that he had got from E for $5000 which he, D, thought would fill the bill. D turned the rug over to C for $8000, and C turned it over to B for $10,000. Between B and A $6000 more was distributed, and the rug was planted in the final owner's house at $16,000.

The same rug has been offered to me for $5000, and I should hate very much to offer E—if he should possess it again—even $3000 for it in cold cash. This practice is called baksheesh in the East, but we dub it plain graft. In fact, the principal reason why the dealers ask the large prices is because they must count on a discount of at least twenty-five per cent to decorators, or to agents who influence decorators and who figure so largely in rug transactions.

Things have moved in circles in the rug trade. When the Oriental first came here he expected to practice cunning, as he had done at home, but he found the American such an easy mark that he threw cunning to the winds and came out brazenly into the open with the most flagrantly extortionate demands. His natural greed—unchecked—destroyed caution. He became careless, and carelessness, we all know, begets blundering, and blundering exposes greed, and the greedy man must again resort to cunning, as he did at the beginning.

Running Up Prices at Auction

The case of a certain dealer and a New York millionaire is a very good example of how greed destroys itself. His wife two years ago permitted me to place in her home two rugs on approval, the price of one being $100,000, and of the other $30,000. I begged the dealer to let me have the two for $60,000 and to keep himself out of the transaction. If he would do this I agreed to put the deal over for ten per cent commission to myself. But the dealer, eager to do me out of some of my commissions, went back on his word and attempted to handle the closing of the deal himself. However, he was no match for the buyer. That gentleman seemed to sense the cunning and avarice of the man and offered him $30,000 for the higher-priced rug and $15,000 for the other. The dealer was wholly unable as a salesman to point out the ridiculous disparity in the two offers. I am quite sure that if the one rug was worth only $30,000 the other was not worth more than $5000—a fact that this buyer would have appreciated if it had been explained to him by a competent man. Owing to the greed and blundering of the trader the deal fell through, and I have always regretted the loss of the rugs to that private house, because it would have had one of the best carpeted halls in the country.

Speaking of this reminds me of another case: A dealer sold to the brother of the man mentioned above a rug for his hall. The trader secured the rug for $2000, less twenty-five per cent and four per cent cash discount—or $1440 net—and sold it for $3000, after asking $4800.

The auction sale is another prolific source of extortion. Dealers almost invariably protect the objects they have placed there for sale. One dealer in New York has made a fortune out of holding such sales periodically in New York and in other places throughout the country. In no case is a rug ever sold for less than the owner intends it shall bring, and where a simple soul from the wilds of the West, who has made a fortune in wheat or any other commodity, wanders in, one such customer is often all that is needed to make the sale successful.

In such cases the rugs are generally catalogued and put up for sale, the auctioneer running the price up very rapidly to a point that has been nominated by the owner. If there are any legitimate bidders over this point the rug of course will be sold, otherwise fake names are given, and the rug is withdrawn.

I can sit in these auction rooms, and close my eyes, and tell whether the bidding is real or not. Fake bidding runs faster than any stream of water, while genuine bidding is a slow process. When the bidding is a fake it will ripple along: "40"—"45"—"50"—and so on to "90"; then it will stop. By this you will see that 90 is the figure the owner has set. After that the

bidding moves more slowly—"91." That's a real bid.

So adroit are the auctioneers at this practice that even an experienced man like myself is liable to be taken in. Only yesterday I spotted a small fragment of a Ming Chinese rug that I was particularly desirous of buying. I thought it an opportunity to get it at a much lower figure at auction than if I waited and made an offer for it later. But one bidder ran the price up on me to $350 so quickly that it took my breath away—and maybe I didn't feel sore when I found out later that it was the auctioneer's son who did the trick.

P. T. Barnum's famous remark that the American people like to be humbugged is not true. The ignorance of the individual is usually the channel through which he is deceived. But this ignorance on the part of the American is rapidly disappearing. Our rich men are being initiated. The second generation of our millionaires are picking up real art objects, and though they are paying fancy prices for them, they are more or less justified, since the things are really wonderful and beautiful.

There has not appeared as yet in the Oriental rug business any standard of values or order of artistic appreciation. The average small dealer, who rarely sees beautiful rugs, is very apt, if some really remarkable specimen of any type comes his way, to appreciate it from a monetary point of view away out of proportion to its real value. Only recently a dealer on Madison Avenue showed me a fair specimen of a Ladik which he valued at $5000. I spent an hour trying to convince him of the harmful influence of a price like this upon the rug people, because no one would pay such a figure without consulting an expert.

I hope some day to see some standardization of rugs and their values. I place a good specimen of the Ghiordies ahead of all the rugs from that district; next comes the Koula; and then the Ladik. These represent the three most valuable weaves. To pay more than from $450 to $750 for a really fine Ladik would not be justified, since for a little more than that amount the collector could secure a Koula, which is a higher type of rug than a Ladik. Or, again, to pay more than $1500 for a fine Koula would be unwise, because a fine Ghiordies, which is superior in artistic value to the Koula, could be got for a sum slightly in excess of that figure. This system applies to all Eastern rugs of all centuries. Occasionally, however, there crops up a specimen of a less fine type which is so remarkable for quality, design and color, so notably the work of a genius, that the value of it will surpass that of a higher type of rug.

The mere technique of Oriental rugs is, to me, their least interesting feature. In this respect I have found myself in accord with the artistic collectors throughout the country, who place color as a primary qualification, design next, and the quality of the material the third and least important factor to be considered.

LESBIA

(Continued from Page 8)

"How could you?" she demanded, turning to John Lawrence. "Oh, how could you?"

He did not answer her immediately, but sat rigidly on his horse, gazing with an immobile face at the ruin of his home. Mercer's horse moved uneasily over the road; his face apparently was flushed with the difficulty of subduing his mount. The silence grew oppressive, until John Lawrence spoke in a measured voice:

"This is progress," he said; "it is successful commerce. It has taken the place of the old sentimental and futile idealism."

"Ah!" she cried impulsively, "and I thought you were high above such peddling. I thought that you at Lesbia were in a different world, one a thousand times more beautiful than the noisy shop that holds the rest of us. I—I think I never want to see you or any other Lawrence again. The thought of Lesbia will make me miserable all my life." She turned away, her eyes bright with tears.

Mercer laid his hand upon her bridle, but she evaded him, gathering up her reins. She brought her crop smashing down upon her horse and was carried with a plunge away from them. John Lawrence watched her disappearing in a whirl of dust.

"She misunderstood me," Mercer muttered.

The other made no response. He was submerged in wave upon wave of adoration for Eily Daunt.

VIII

WHEN the elder brother arrived at his office on the following morning a fire glowed in the open bow of the Franklin stove. A clear light filled the room, revealing the marks of its long occupation. The engravings were sere and spotted with mold; he saw that the green baize on his desk was motheaten and stained with ink; the coco matting was worn to its last fibers.

The office, John Lawrence felt, was outworn like himself. Just as the day exposed the dilapidation of his surrounding, the vivid personality of Eily Daunt made clear what he now felt to have been the impotence of his life and paramount purpose. For the first time a serious doubt entered his mind of the possibility of making another's way through life. In reviewing the past he was suddenly unable to recall an instance in which he had rendered a permanent benefit to his brother. He had extricated him from the difficulties Mercer had been obliged to confess after their consummation, but he had been helpless to prevent their repetition. Since Mercer's boyhood he had been called upon to settle the irresponsible obligations contracted by his younger brother. This, he felt, had been inevitable; even without the especial charge from their mother he would have done all that. But now at the supreme necessity of Mercer's existence his utmost help had been mere bungling. Life evaded his dragooning, refused to fall into the plan he had fatuously proposed.

Seated at his desk, his back was turned toward the door; and at its opening he looked about indifferently. He got erect, however.

Eily Daunt stood against the wall, severely clad in dark-blue linen and a little hat.

"I knew Mercer wouldn't be here," she said elliptically; "at least not for a while. He's rather upset."

John Lawrence, with his unconscious courtly manner, drew a chair toward her.

"Do you wish to talk about Mercer?" he asked.

"No," she returned with a surprising vigor, "I don't! I want to talk about myself. You see," she added with a faint smile, "I am horribly selfish. I am afraid that I have been tremendously spoiled. I'm forward, too, for my age—all the qualities, I suppose, that you detest most. I am not like yourself, with a weight of tradition to support and regulate me. We have no past, father and I—you knew my mother was dead? We are all future; we're even newer than you thought. You see—everything to gain and little to lose."

He listened intently, gravely, without reply.

"My friendship with Marvel Granger," she continued, "and with the Honorable Lawrences, has been quite wonderful for a young person without antecedents. It has made the rest of my life stupid by contrast. I love it here," she said, suddenly wistful; "that's why I felt so badly about Lesbia—it was the most perfect part of a beautiful whole." She stopped for a moment, then continued with appalling candor.

"I made up my mind to stay here, if I could, at Lesbia. I encouraged Mercer brazenly. And then all at once, when everything had happened as I had planned, I couldn't. I tried over and over, but I had spoiled it for myself—by something unutterably foolish, useless." She paused and gazed thoughtfully about the room, lingering over the threadbare matting, the dusty, stained walls. "Where," she asked, "have you been living since you sold your home?"

"With an old connection of the family's," he told her—"with Miss Letitia Coulter."

"You mean in a boarding house."

"Oh, no," he replied, with a slight humorous inflection; "Miss Letitia accepts a few 'paying guests.'"

She smiled at him so frankly, with such a wide, blue gaze, that he was forced to turn away.

"I shall never forgive myself for not understanding," she announced. "I mean," she informed his evident lack of comprehension, "for not realizing why you sold Lesbia. You did it to give Mercer the money to follow me North."

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He was, before this direct attack, unable to oppose a word.

"And that," she went on, "just ruined everything for me. I might conceivably have made a highly ornamental marriage if it hadn't been for that last act of yours. Why did you do it and spoil a young girl's chances? It isn't nice to be such a paragon in an ordinary, sinful world. Do you want to talk? Father says I never give anyone else a chance to speak."

"No," he replied seriously; "there's nothing I might say."

"If it hadn't been for me you would still have Lesbia—you sacrificed it for something which the very sacrifice made impossible." She rose and moved about the room, examining the portraits of the departed, legal Lawrences.

"John Lawrence," she said suddenly, her back carefully toward him, "will you marry me?"

With a slight, involuntary gasp he made a gesture toward her with his arms which she did not see. The blood beat in his head in such a volume that he could hear it pounding with the unsteady tumult of his heart. It was an incredible, an unthinkable, situation, and yet it seemed an entirely natural, graceful thing for Eily Daunt to do. He realized her extraordinary bravery, and worshiped her for it. Every atom of him longed to take her into his arms, to assure her of his supreme love.

The thought of Mercer rose before him, and with all his being struggling for its own right, its own expression, he instinctively crushed back his hunger before the need, the claim, of his brother. He said, with the pain of it cutting like a blade at his heart:

"It isn't possible for me to do that."

She turned abruptly. Her face was pale, but her eyes met his without faltering.

"Will you tell me why?" she persisted.

"My brother loves you," he replied. "He has loved you since he first met you."

"But I don't want to talk about him!" she cried; "I want to talk about me, me, me! I told you that I was selfish. I don't care a bubble about Mercer Lawrence—I told him this morning. He doesn't concern me in the least, and he shouldn't you—now. This is not the time to be magnanimous. You mustn't think only of your selfish virtue; you are not sacrificing just you." She stopped and gazed at him tensely, her hands tightly clasped, her chin elevated. "All the qualities you detest most," she repeated.

"No," he told her, pausing after each word, "all the qualities that seem to me speechlessly fine."

"What I asked you a few minutes ago was not what I meant," she said. "What I should have said was: 'John Lawrence, do you love me?'"

"My brother, Mercer, loves you," he reiterated, masking, in his slow speech, the enormous difficulty of maintaining his determination to serve Mercer. "He would be far better for you than myself. I'm rather worn, rather dusty with the past. I'm even a failure to-day in my profession, overburdened with old prejudices."

"How absolutely stupid of you—to tell me that now! Don't you see that those things are just—just what——" She choked, paused. "I'm shameless," she went on recklessly; "I can't help it. I've always asked directly for what I wanted. And I felt that some silly consideration was keeping from me what I wanted more than anything else in the world. So I demanded it."

"But Mercer," he said, again impotently.

"Do you want me to marry him?" she asked.

"I've tried to make that possible."

"I suppose this is awfully fine," she declared, "but it seems to me only absurd. It seems to me as if you were afraid of life, as if you preferred to stand aside and direct it to your brother.

"I said that only because I'm cross. It didn't do; I should have guessed it wouldn't. Yes, it was a mistake. You'll think of me as an extraordinary young thing from the North without any sense of form." She came closer to him, like a vivid flower endowed with speech, palpitating with the blood of resplendent youth, vitality.

"I'm sorry about Lesbia," she told him; "I wish I had known before. It has all been so tragic and funny and useless. I know something else, though, oh, beyond any question. It was at the bottom of my heart before I came here to-day. But it won't do us any good. You see, you're one of the Honorable Lawrences. I suppose love and wanting are poor things in comparison. I am afraid I'm not honorable like that. I suppose it's because I'm so very much alive, I want so strongly. I am going now. I'm glad I said what I did, even if it has shocked your—your dignity and sense of the proper conduct for young women. If I had been sensible I'd have married Mercer. But, you see, I have been spoiled; I have a crude and unregulated hunger for happiness." She stopped at the door. "Good-by, John Lawrence," she said with a formal little bow. "I hope it won't hurt you—what you must be—as much as it has hurt me." She closed the door softly, shutting him alone into his old, familiar surrounding.

HE METHODICALLY assembled some scattered papers lying on the desk before him. The fire of coals had grown gray, and he crossed the room to the Franklin stove, stirring it into a fresh, ruddy life. It had grown darker without; a pall of clouds extended across the deeps of sky, and he thought stupidly that the sudden gloom had been caused by Eily's going. An imponderable lassitude settled upon his spirit. That silent closing of the door had shut out from him the last vestige of youth, of actual living. He had become in a moment a nonentity, a man without individual existence, a shadowy onlooker at life.

A deep resentment possessed him at this deliberate murder of his essential being, this surrender of his absolute need. Eily Daunt had said that his virtue was selfish; he had sacrificed her, too, in the fulfillment of his sense of duty, his promise. That made his position a hundredfold more debatable. If his decision had affected no one but himself he might have supported it with a degree of philosophy, but he was powerless to isolate its results.

He heard quick footsteps on the flags without, and his brother entered, tense with suppressed anger. Mercer Lawrence stood over his desk, regarding the other with a bright, set stare.

"I suppose," he said finally, "that I am to congratulate you?"

John Lawrence turned his pale, severe countenance upon his brother. "I was just wondering about that myself," he returned quietly.

"At any rate," Mercer continued, "the old stuff about my best interest has been dispensed with; at least we see each other stripped of polite fictions."

"I have been thinking about that too," the older man asserted; "it may be that we have never seen each other justly. But it's too late to change now; we must accept the results of our mistake."

"You mean that I must pay for my—my blind confidence in you, in Old John. What a cursed fool I've been!"

"You're a mind reader," John Lawrence added, "and saying everything that has gone through my thoughts."

"Old John," the other repeated contemptuously—"a father to me!"

"It was an unnatural rôle. Let's admit that I failed."

"You know that Eily Daunt refused to marry me?"

John Lawrence gravely said that he did.

"Ah!" Mercer cried, "you have seen her already, you—you——" Words failed him for the moment. Then: "Couldn't you have kept up the game for a decent interval?"

John Lawrence's pallor, his gaunt severity of countenance, deepened. He was sitting facing his brother, with one thin leg swung over the other, his hands clasped on his knee, and slowly his pose lost its ease: he became rigid, formal, and, strangely, even more old-fashioned, more withdrawn, like one of the steel engravings above him. He spoke dryly, without any trace of personal emotion or interest.

"You have misunderstood me, perhaps intentionally. When I referred to our past relationship, to my possibly wrong conception of duty, I was speaking only of its obvious failure. I was considering a very widely accepted standard of obligation and conduct in the light of what it has brought us."

"You are not addressing the court," Mercer reminded him bitterly; "heavy rhetoric is useless now. Since you know that Eily has refused me you must know why."

"Yes," the other said simply, "I know that too."

Mercer Lawrence's anger colored his face crimson; he strode toward his brother, stood over him with clenched fists. "You surreptitious traitor!" he exclaimed. "Why didn't you come into the open? It seems now that I never had a chance, not from the first. Eily made that painfully clear. Why didn't you tell me then and save this—this painful humiliation? Had you grown so used to your hypocritical pose, your superiority, that anything else was impossible?"

"Mercer," John Lawrence said sternly, "I can forgive this because of your misery."

"Forgive!" the other mocked. "Must you keep this up beyond the end? Can't you see that your pretty attitude has been exposed. I know you, after so many years. I've seen you bare of your assumed dignity and righteousness. It's all clear to me—how you won Eily's love with your sacrificial air and talk of parental responsibility; how you encouraged her, led her on, tricked her interest and fanned it into affection. Selling Lesbia was the most damnable part of all. How cunningly you must have shown her your suffering heart, hinted at your beautiful unselfishness."

"You had better exhaust yourself now," the other said wearily. "There is a great deal of the future to face together, and without much incentive."

Mercer Lawrence raised his clenched fist above the sitting figure.

"You liar!" he stuttered. "You crooked liar!"

He stood rigid, motionless, for a long breath. Then, as though the influence of that epithet had loosened all his fibers, his arm slowly dropped. He stepped uncertainly back, with open hands, wetting his lips.

John Lawrence sat like a clothed figure of marble; his lips even were white. The silence in the room grew unsupportable. Mercer said finally in a husky voice: "Old John——" He stopped before the concentrated, glittering menace, the utter alienism, of his brother's countenance. The stillness increased.

Then inexplicably John Lawrence's tenseness vanished. He sighed deeply, as though an insuperable burden had been lifted from his shoulders. He turned to his desk, putting away the papers he had assembled, then rose, facing his brother.

"Ever since your childhood," he said deliberately, "I have been paying for your mistakes, hoping sometime to make you see life as the other men of your family have seen it. At her death your mother asked me to take care of you. She gave me that as a trust, and I accepted it. I did all that was possible, and it has come to rather less than nothing—it has been a continual nuisance to yourself. Now you may be glad to hear that it is at an end. You have freed yourself to live as you find best, without any interference. If in doing this I betray what I should have held sacred above life, I must pay for it."

He stopped, and moved to a small mirror, where he rearranged his necktie.

Mercer watched this trivial act in a consternation of surprise. Then John Lawrence gathered up his hat and stick and made his way to the door. There he turned:

"I am on my way to become engaged to Miss Daunt," he said. "If you offer the least opposition"— his voice grew measured, chill—"I shall kill you immediately."

The younger, his head bowed upon his breast, did not see the other go.

Childish Simplicity

A PROMINENT Episcopal clergyman in Texas has a five-year-old granddaughter whose precocity frequently expresses itself in unusual questions. One Sunday morning, as the grandfather sat in his study running over the points of his forenoon sermon, the youngster entered.

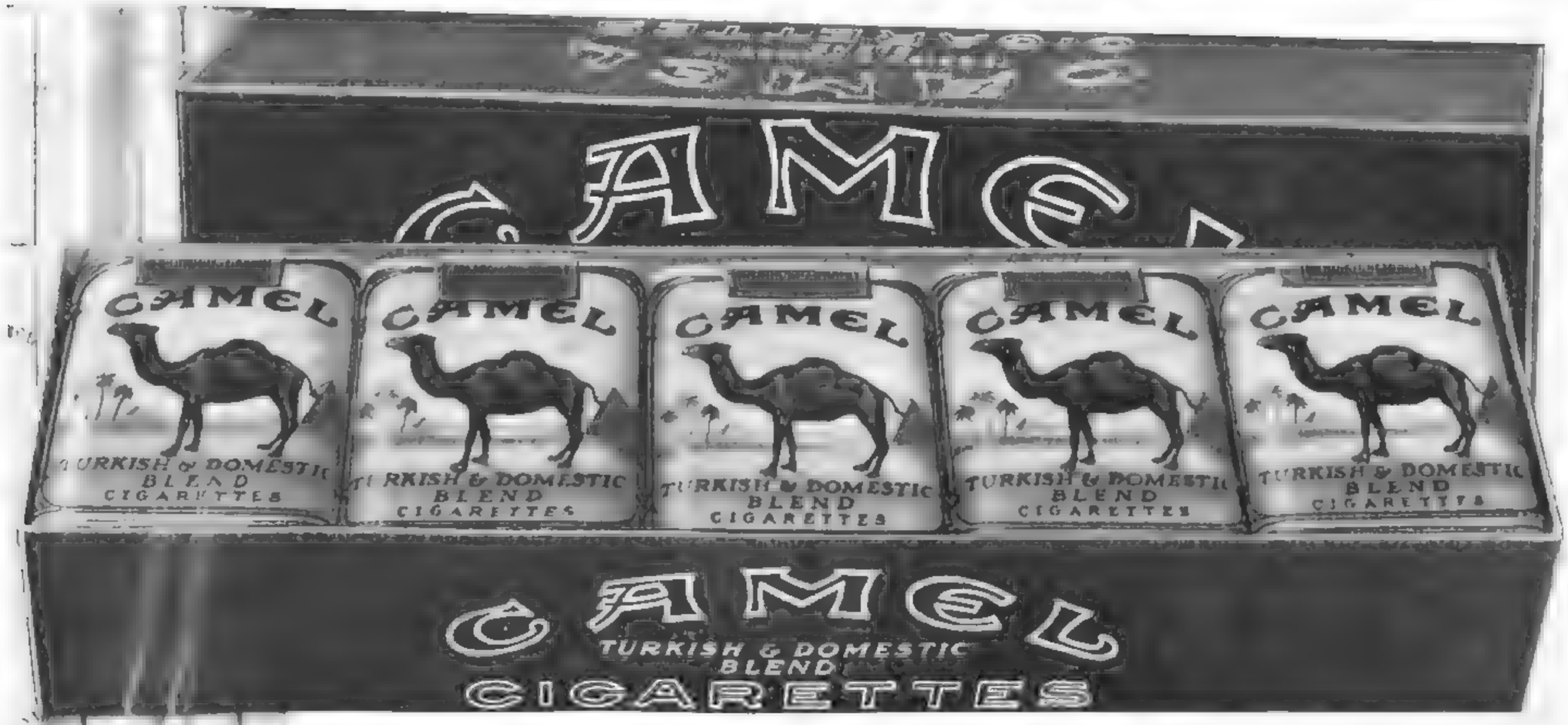
"Granddaddy," she said, "I wants to ask you sump'n."

"Honey," said the clergyman, "granddaddy is very busy. Run away now and come back this afternoon."

"But it'll only take you a minute to tell me," persisted the little one.

"Well," he said, knowing from past experiences that she was not to be dissuaded from her purposes, "if it will take only a minute, go ahead. What is it you wish me to tell you?"

"I want," said the child, "to know about condensed milk and the Immaculate Conception."



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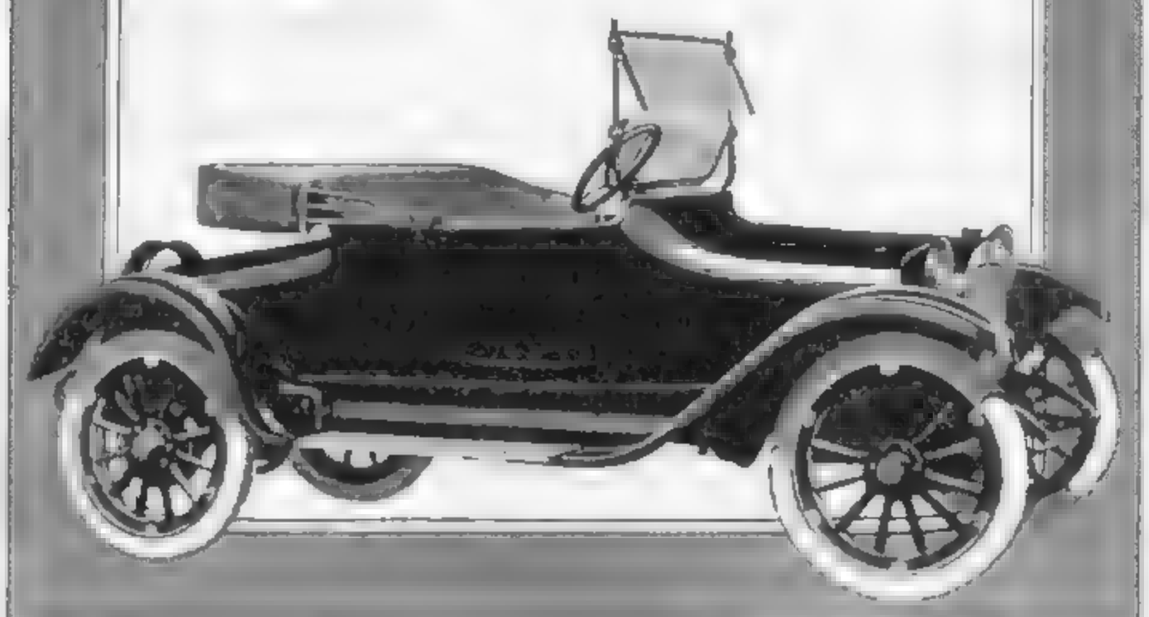

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THE CURTIS PUBLISHING COMPANY, PHILADELPHIA, PA.

GHOST CITIES OF THE WEST

(Continued from Page 5)

"—— Richardson was killed by J. P. Cullen, who got two years and six months in prison. The sentence was considered severe."

"John Read and John McMahon, policemen, were shot and killed by a man named Campbell. He was acquitted."

In this same chapter we have proof that the bad man of the period was short-lived and marked for destruction. A man setting out to be bad usually established his reputation for badness by killing a killer. He then became an object of interest for weeks or months and passed on in the smoke of another aspirant's gun. The four paragraphs given below illustrate the succession and are quoted word for word, beginning with the first killing on record in Virginia City:

"1859. French Pete was killed by Billy Brown on B Street."

"1860. November. Billy Brown was killed by Jack Williams in a billiard saloon on North C Street."

"1862. December 10. Jack Williams was killed in Pat Lynch's saloon by Joe McGee."

"1863. December 9. Joe McGee was shot and killed by John Daley in Carson City, Daley using the same gun with which McGee killed Williams one year before."

Of the early bad men on the Comstock, Sam Brown was the earliest and worst. He killed for the fun of the thing and had a habit of picking out inoffensive victims. Brown came to Nevada from Sacramento in 1859, a burly, red-whiskered, bull-necked ruffian who did his own advertising and needed no press agent. He left Sacramento in somewhat of a hurry, the circumstances, as related by a pioneer of California, being substantially as follows:

"Brown had a habit of wandering into saloons, when he felt a bad spell coming on, and introducing himself at the top of his voice. It wasn't necessary; everybody knew him and nobody knew any good of him. He was a bad man with a gun or a knife, and he had the notches on the handle of his bowie to prove it.

"Well, one night he came busting into a saloon in Sacramento and interfering with business. Word was carried to the chief of police. He was a little man, about half as big as Brown, but what there was of him was all sand.

"'Sam Brown is down at Joe's place threatening to kill somebody. Better call out the officers and arrest him.'

"'Why the officers?' says the chief, getting up and buckling on knife and gun.

"Brown was still holding the fort when the chief got there, and roaring so he could be heard a mile. Everybody in the place was roosting high and taking particular pains not to disagree with him."

Sam Brown's Birthday Party

"'Come out of this!' says the chief, tapping Brown on the shoulder. 'I want you.' Brown looked down at him and laughed.

"'I guess you don't know who I am,' says he. 'I'm Sam Brown!'

"'I guess you don't know who I am!' says the chief, and quick as a flash he grabbed Brown by the whiskers with his left hand and yanked his chin up in the air. At the same time out came his bowie, and he laid the blade square across Brown's Adam's apple. 'I'm the chief of police of this town,' says he, 'and if you don't come quiet, I'll take the top part of you along anyway!'

"Well, sir, he dragged Brown to the calaboose by his red whiskers and threw him into a cell. Sam didn't stay long in Sacramento after he got out. He thought his health needed more altitude."

Brown arrived in Carson City early in 1859 and introduced himself by shooting a man named Bilboa. Nothing was done to him for the killing and Brown moved on to Virginia City, where he became the king of the roughs, lording it over the law-abiding citizens and terrorizing the would-be bad men. He killed often enough to maintain his reputation, and once, after carving a man, named McKenzie, in a billiard hall, Brown curled up on the billiard table and insisted upon taking a nap, leaving word that he did not wish to be disturbed. His wish was respected. But for a desire to celebrate his birthday in characteristic fashion, Brown might have lived a little longer than he did.

"Being as it's my birthday," he remarked to a friend, "I guess I'll have to get somebody before night."

Why he should have elected to "get" a quiet, harmless farmer, named Vansickle, has always remained a mystery. Vansickle did not wait to study the problem, but loaded a double-barreled shotgun and did the Washoe Country a service. At the end Brown showed his yellow streak and begged hard for his life.

There were other bad men in Virginia in the early days who were not of the Sam Brown type. For instance, there was Langford Peel—a slight, well-behaved, mild-mannered little man who brought with him from Salt Lake the reputation of a killer. In those days a foreign record did not entitle its holder to much consideration. The bad man had to prove his badness, or move on. Langford Peel wore good clothes, spoke excellent English and attended to his own affairs, consequently the local bullies had their doubts about him. Dick Paddock decided to give the newcomer a try-out and found occasion to jostle and insult him. Peel protested.

"Do you want to take it up?" asked Paddock.

"I have no objections," answered Peel.

"All right. What's your game?" Meaning, of course, knife or gun.

"Your game, sir," said Peel, bowing, "is mine."

Paddock reached for his revolver, but he was just the fraction of a second late. Peel disabled him with two shots—one through the right hand, the other through the lungs. This should have satisfied the local order of the Sons of Sudden Death, but it did not.

A Time When Everybody Gambled

John Dennis, better known as Eldorado Johnny, took up Paddock's quarrel. Eldorado Johnny was bad, but he had a certain grim sense of humor and a flickering idea of the fitness of things. He let it be known that he was gunning for Peel, and while this news was circulating up and down C Street Eldorado Johnny sought a barber shop.

"Shave me two days under the skin," was his order, "and curl my hair and black my boots. I'm after that fellow Peel, and I want to look handsome when I get him."

We have the word of the historian of the period that he did look handsome.

"Eldorado Johnny," so reads the record, "made a good appearance at the funeral. He was the most genteel corpse the roughs ever turned out to bury."

But life in the sixties was not all violence and bloodshed; under the froth there was a solid citizenry. The miners—by far the largest single element in the camp—were a kindly people, and many of their customs might serve as models for any community. The entire city contributed liberally to the support of the widows and orphans, and when a man was hurt or killed in one of the numerous underground accidents it was the usual thing for every man working in the mine to chip in to the extent of one day's pay—four dollars.

"If a man was sick," said one of the Comstock veterans, "the scene at his bedside was like a conference of the nations. Americans, Englishmen, Irishmen, Swedes, Germans, Mexicans, Bohunks—even the Chinamen—would drop in to see if there was anything they could do. They were the best and the biggest-hearted people in the world; nothing was too much trouble if a man needed help."

The miners could be firm though. They believed that they had rights and they stood up for them. For instance, a Chinaman was welcome as a laundryman but not as a day laborer. When the railroad was building—this was in 1869—Chinese labor was employed in Ormsby and Lyon Counties. The miners of Virginia and Gold Hill held a mass meeting and decided that the yellow peril must not be allowed to cross the line into Storey County. This message was carried to the builders of the road. The Oldest Inhabitant remembers what happened next:

"They sent back word that the miners could go chase themselves or, anyway, that was the gist of it. They were building that road; they were building it their own way and they didn't thank anybody for suggestions. The miners held another meeting.

In the meantime the road was getting closer and closer to the Storey County line. Just before they got to it, the boss foreman heard music, and down from Gold Hill came a brass band playing war tunes, and behind the band were the miners, hundreds of 'em—with ropes. They lined up on the boundary of Storey County. 'Now, then,' says the head of the miners' union, 'bring the Pigtails across if you think it will be healthy for you!' The long and the short of it was that the Chinamen didn't come in; white labor completed the road. That was the way they did things in the old days. When they had a job on hand they hired a brass band to give it tone and went through with it to fast music."

The world has heard much of Virginia City journalism, due in a great measure to the brilliant staff of the Territorial Enterprise. Clemens, Wright—Dan DeQuille—Goodman, Gillis and McCarthy—these were the stars of the morning paper, but it hardly seems fair to slight their evening rival, the Virginia Chronicle. There were able pens and nimble wits on the opposition paper, and the following items are submitted as typical of the style and period:

"One more unfortunate—Chinawoman—weary of breath, rashly importunate, ate six bits' worth of opium Thursday night. Oh, it was pitiful, but in this cityfull friend she had some who hustled a stomach pump and hoisted the pizen from her lower levels in time to save her bacon. Cause, desertion by one who stole her heart and $305 in cash."

Now that was the sort of news item to tickle Virginia's sense of humor. It was at once a parody and a piece of reporting; it was pithy, not too long, and contained exactly the proper spicing with the slang of the community and period. The Chronicle's editorial expressions were always worth reading because of their candor. Witness the following explanation, appearing under the heading "Delayed":

"The Chronicle went to press an hour late yesterday, owing to the delay in the telegraph, the hurry and confusion incident to a great enterprise and Clark and Vesey's smooth old bourbon."

Delicate sarcasm was also employed editorially, usually pointed at the Enterprise. Note this barbed shaft:

"The date of the departure of Mr. and Mrs. John Mackay for Philadelphia is somewhat uncertain. Mr. Mackay heard of this trip for the first time this morning in a local item in the Enterprise. After he gets back from Philadelphia he will find out from the same source where he is going next."

Virginia City was always speculatively inclined, but the high tide struck the Comstock in the seventies. In 1870 stock in the Belcher mine went begging at $1 a share; in 1872 it was worth $1525. During the same period Crown Point advanced from $2 to $1825. Those were the days when stock quotations were posted every hour, and when the miners came up out of the shafts they rushed to the bulletin boards to see how much money they had made while underground. Rich and poor, high and low, white, black and yellow, everybody gambled. The financial giants of San Francisco were juggling Virginia stocks, and nobody had to wait long for action. Fortunes were made and lost every day.

Silver Princes of the Seventies

The country was ripe for the greatest discovery of all, and in 1873 it came, though it was a full year before the extent of the treasure became generally known. This was the Big Bonanza, so called to distinguish it from all other bonanzas. It was found in the Consolidated Virginia mine at a point below the eleven-hundred-foot level, found at a time when the owners of the property were almost discouraged. They had nearly given up hope of striking the lode, and nothing but the presence of great ore bodies to the right and left of them had kept them at work. Then they found it—the strong-box of the Comstock Lode.

The Big Bonanza was a body of ore from six to seven hundred feet long, three hundred and fifty feet wide and from two to three hundred feet high, and was, so wrote Dan DeQuille, "of such extraordinary and astonishing richness that experts could hardly believe their eyes or assayers their figures."

Books have been written about the Big Bonanza, but perhaps the best way to convey an idea of its richness is to use cold figures. This one body of ore, extending into the property of the California mine, yielded in silver and gold the staggering total of $111,975,761.39. The two Bonanza mines—the Consolidated Virginia and the California—paid dividends of $75,000,000. They made silver princes of Flood, Fair, Mackay & O'Brien, and perhaps a score of other men as well, and they figured in some of the most startling operations in the history of stock markets. From 17 cents a share in 1871, Con. Virginia leaped to $780. A number of the most prominent mining experts of the day put themselves on record as declaring that the Bonanza mines had ore in sight to the value of $1,500,000,000.

This was Virginia's heyday. Everything that had gone before was dwarfed by the flood of gold and silver from the two mines. Men went money mad, and women too. An investment of a few dollars sometimes brought thousands; there were enough cases of the kind to stimulate public imagination, if, indeed, it needed stimulation. A chambermaid "fooled with stocks a little," and in 1875 she retired with a bank balance of two hundred thousand dollars. The Chronicle printed the news among the local items—just a paragraph. The case of the chambermaid was unusual only in one particular, and this was pointed out by the reporter—she was still unmarried.

When Cooks Turned Capitalists

"Could such a thing as that happen?" The Oldest Inhabitant snorted his indignation at the question. "Why, it happened right along! I knew a man in Gold Hill. He lost the best cook he ever had just because she got rich when Con. Virginia went up. Could it happen!"

With pencil and paper and a record of the top and bottom prices it can be demonstrated that a twenty-five-dollar investment in Consolidated Virginia would have paid $109,980, if—and this is a big if—bought at the bottom and sold at the top. The same investment in Belcher would have paid $38,125 and in Crown Point, $22,800.

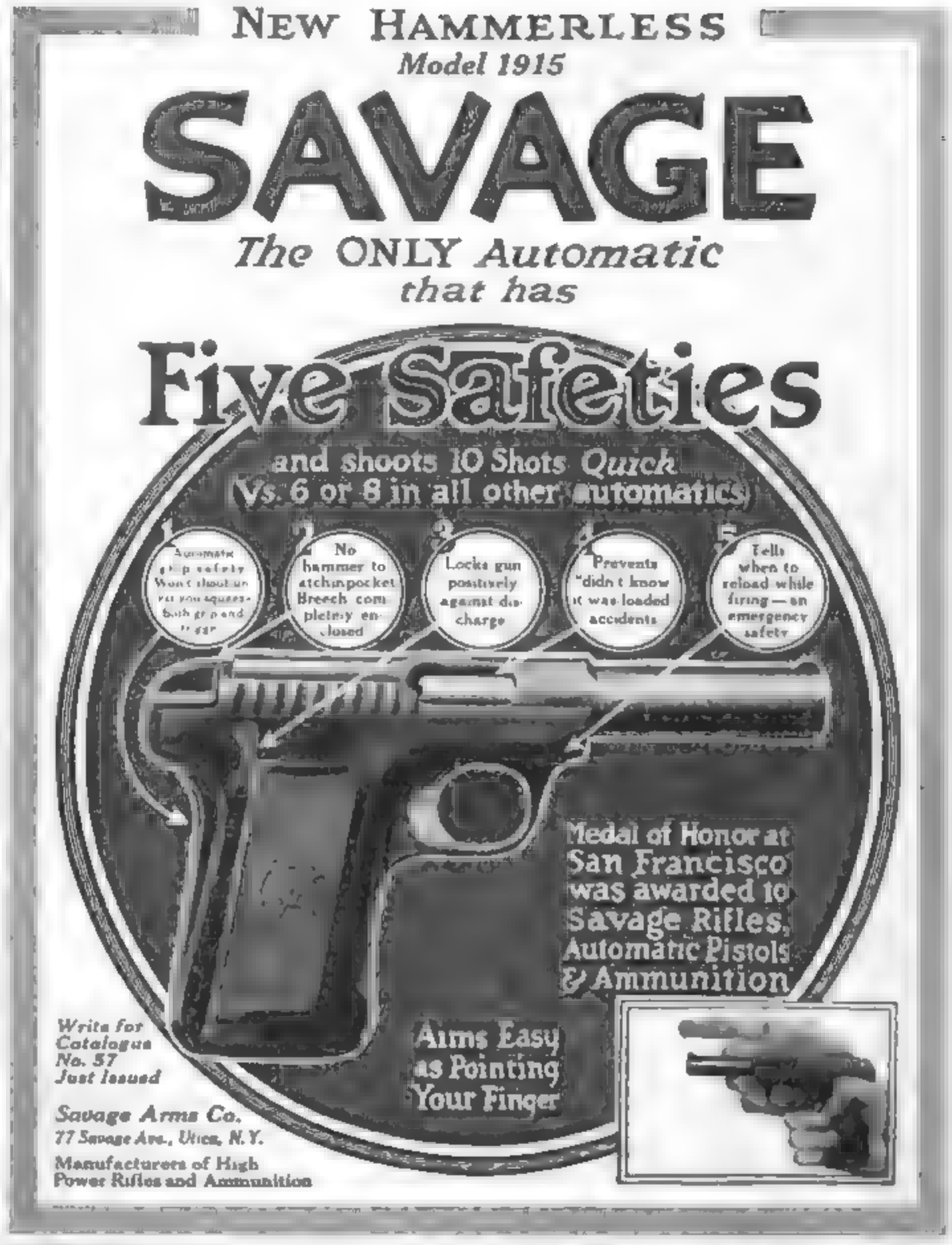
So the stories of the chambermaid and the cook do not seem unlikely after all. Somebody profited by those amazing advances of the seventies. At one time or another fortune's wing grazed every man on the Comstock; the grizzled veterans of the Bonanza period are able to point out the exact spot where they missed their big chance.

"You see," says the Oldest Inhabitant, "there was the stock you knew you ought to buy, but didn't. There was the stock you bought and sold too soon. And then there was the stock you didn't sell soon enough."

The spirit of the time was one of optimism. Whatever might happen, Virginia was serenely confident that there was as much in the ground as ever came out of it. Didn't the Big Bonanza prove it? The fire of 1875 swept away two thousand buildings, including the entire business portion of the city and the mills and hoisting works of the mines. The property loss totaled ten millions. Did Virginia mourn her hard luck? The very next day she was rebuilding—with bricks so hot that streams of water were played on them. Ten millions? A mere bagatelle. The fire was on the twenty-sixth of October. The Consolidated Virginia mine estimated its property loss at one million and a half, and the workings were idle for two months while new buildings were being erected, but the mine paid the usual monthly dividend of ten dollars a share just the same. Virginia had a corner on optimism in those days.

"We thought it was never going to end," says the Oldest Inhabitant. "The mining experts said it wouldn't and couldn't—but it did. They had the Big Bonanza pretty well worked out in six years and finished entirely in nine, but, oh, what a six years that was—and what a smash came afterward!"

It had to come; the strong-box of the Comstock was not inexhaustible. Since 1885 the history of Virginia City has been one of steady decline. She rallied a bit after the great crash of the early eighties, but it was a feeble effort. Gradually her population drifted away; her silver princes went East to find employment for their millions; her young men went West. One by one the great mines closed down; the hatches were nailed over the shafts; and the miners, always the backbone of the population, drifted to other camps where to this day they boast that they are hot-water plugs.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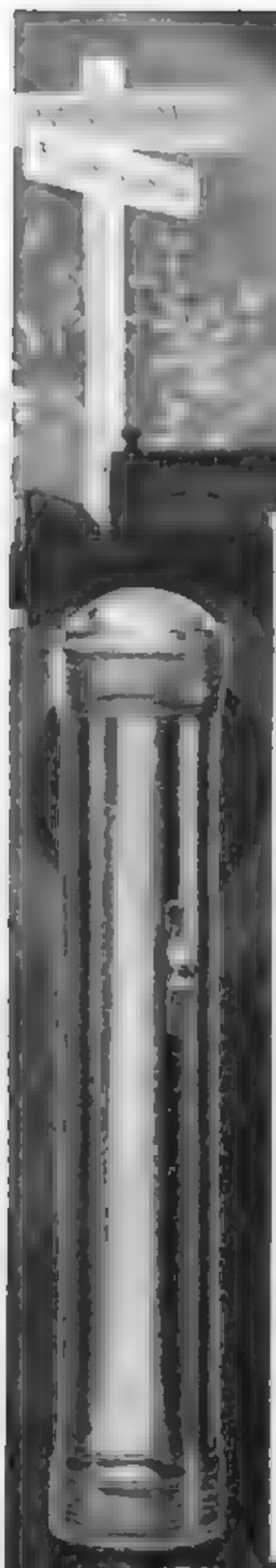

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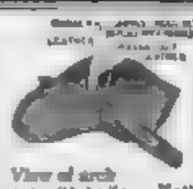

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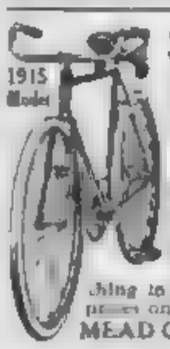

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The old men remain. They do not believe that the Comstock Lode is exhausted; they point out that people said so in the early seventies, with the greatest bonanza still to come. They hope for another bonanza some day—not so great perhaps as the Big Bonanza—for there could be only one like that, they say—but still a bonanza, and then Virginia will come back.

Not long ago a Japanese diplomat visited the West and in the course of his wanderings came to Virginia City. He was received with all courtesy—and when it comes to courtesy no state in the Union can give points to Nevada—and shown the various points of interest.

"This," said the guide, "used to be the shaft of the old Con. Virginia. They took sixty-five millions out of that hole in the ground. . . . Over there used to be the California—forty-seven millions. . . . Here is where the old Mexican mine used to be. . . . This is the Enterprise office. Mark Twain used to be a reporter on this paper." And so on.

The visitor was very polite but somewhat noncommittal. At the end of the afternoon the guide thought to prod him into a direct statement. "Well," said he, "what do you think of Virginia?"

"I think," said the Japanese, still politely, "that it is a very great used-to-be."

THE VELVET BLACK

(Continued from Page 13)

Two pulses throbbed in her ears—one the heart pounding within her; the other a pulse that came from the heart of the velvet black. Yet she strained her ears for all sounds. He was sniffing now—the quick intake and ejection of breath in his nostrils.

"No shot?" said he at last. "Why, the room is filled with the odor of gun smoke."

He spoke severely, spacing his words, pronouncing sentence on one he had convicted of a lie. The dark itself seemed to sway sickeningly as she heard him.

"Don't move!" she said hoarsely.

She felt that the unseen eyes of the other man were turned toward her; she must answer quickly; she must gain time; she must give an explanation that would hold the situation. Everything brought about by her one piercing scream depended on her; hers was the task of outwitting fate. There flashed into her mind the folly of her agreement not to tell of the presence of the marauder; for she believed, if she could now explain the truth and then warn and plead, she could make the man at the door retreat to safety. But now a word from her in breach of her agreement would bring a finger down on a trigger, the cough of fire and the lead of death.

"Don't move!" she repeated so quickly on the heels of her other words that she could not believe there had been space for thought. "I'll confess, dear. The gun is in my hand now. I awoke in terrible depression. If you come near me now I cannot control myself. The cold muzzle is against my breast now, dear. I'll take it away if you'll only go. Oh, I did—I did—I tried to kill myself. And I made just a scratch on my arm. Now you know the truth. Don't move! Don't startle me! I'm coming to myself. Please go! If you will I'll throw the thing away and come to you—upstairs. I can control myself now; but if you take one step forward ——"

She leaned forward as her threat died in her throat, listening to the heavy breathing of the one at whom she had poured out her words.

"Edith," said he, "I ——"

He had stopped suddenly. She heard the sniffing noise again, as though he had caught in his nostrils a new smell. She knew what this meant: a whiff of the marauder had reached him.

"Go! Go!" she cried out in agony.

"Be still!" he commanded.

"I can't be still."

"Be still!" His voice came again sharply through the dark.

She knew that, at last, he suspected the truth; that he had sensed the presence of a third human being; that he wanted to listen for the sound of his breathing. She clasped her hands, soft palm against soft palm. When the noise of that cushioned contact had gone, the velvet black was again a bottomless, endless universe of dark and silence. The voice at the doorway split asunder this universe.

"There he is!" came this hoarse cry.

At once a tongue of flame from the opposite wall leaped out at the voice. The explosion shattered the stillness, as though the stillness itself was a fragile thing, which, when broken, fell like water into tiny particles, then, reunited, made silence again. She thought she heard the lead spattering down from its impact on metal—perhaps from the brass door handle.

Nobody fell. She listened for that. There was an instant after the shot when a human body, toppling over, would have struck the floor with the thud of its limp weight. The marauder had missed!

He had missed and had disclosed his position in the sightless wilderness of dark. The answering shot rose from the floor, coursing in its spit toward the mark from which the first tongue had licked the velvet black. The defender of the house, she knew now, had dropped to the floor craftily as he had shouted his challenge. He had shot three times now in answer to the attack—the first shot and then the crash of two more!

Each of the three made its own red, yellow and silver streak—merely a trail of hot, scintillating, noisy wire through the soot and silence, disclosing nothing, exhibiting for the eye only a vanishing line of terrible thinness and straightness from one point to another in the smothering dark.

She threw herself forward on the bed, on her hands and knees, looking into the ink the trails of fire had left after their sudden vanishing and straining her ears for sounds.

"Move! Move!" she screamed. "Keep moving! He'll fire if he hears you. He's a burglar. You haven't hit him."

Out of the void of dark and noiselessness that swayed for a moment before her came the sound of something squirming along the carpet at the foot of the bed—a man dragging himself along on his belly—the sound of a slothful snake. She stared down, trying to pierce the velvet black with her gaze, as one looking over the edge of a boat tries to see into great depths.

The man, however, moving so cautiously, so like a stealthy reptile that he barely made a whisper of noise on the thick-pile carpet, crept away into the depths of the soot—giving no sign, unrecognized, unidentified. She did not know which of the two, each of whom had lost the other in the dark, had passed so near.

"Get behind something!" she cried hysterically. "Do you hear me? Answer!"

No answer arose from the swaying velvet black that filled the apartment. Crouched on her knees, she pressed her knuckles into each side of her throat, realizing that she had called on him to do that which would mean for him almost certain destruction.

The two men were hidden in the dark now—each waiting for a sign from the other, a sign that would give the advantage of the first shot. She knew that each crouched breathlessly or moved inch by inch in the inky darkness, even shifting the weights of their bodies with a caution which estimated correctly the squeak of a floor board, the brush of a coat sleeve, the rattle of a cuff link, the sound of a suppressed sneeze. Beginning unequal, the battle was now without advantage to either.

Her own safety meant nothing to her now; her one thought was that, with her cry, she had brought the man from upstairs to a hazard which might end in a gaping wound above his heart. She dared not make a rush for the doorway or break into screams.

To one of the two silent hunters in the room she was of no consequence; it was the other who would disregard his own safety to protect her; it was the other who must be allowed to fix his whole attention on a battle of wits and lead.

She stiffened the muscles of her body as she resigned herself to be a silent, sightless witness of the contest, come what might, until the end. Something would snatch the terrible velvet black shroud away at last. The boon of light would come. Day would break; she could count on a dawn at the end of some kind of eternity. . . . Her mind swayed. . . . There would be a death in the room!

Clack! She knew the sound. A drinking glass, with a few drops of water left in it, stood on the glass top of her boudoir table. It had fallen on its side, knocked over by a groping hand; she heard the first drop,

which had rolled to the edge and tapped the carpet below. . . . A second drop would fall

The second drop she did not hear, because the stillness was ripped from end to end by three shots—driven like arrows of fire across the blank face of the dark—at the spot from which the noise had come. Somewhere among them she heard a short laugh, but from which throat she could not tell.

The last of the three explosions was robbed of its domination of the velvet black and of the silence by the first of those that blew their fiery, snapping answers across the room. This one must have struck the mirror on her bureau, because behind the layers of the half-solid dark came the crash of glass and the tinkle of the slivers that fell among the toilet articles. The second answering shot stuck out its red tongue three feet away, on the left, and directed its poisonous ejection at a spot below the landing place of the first little deadly explorer.

She heard the cluck of the gun's mechanism distinctly this time. The belch of its muzzle showed its vicious leap three feet on the right and near the floor, telling the story of a man who, unseen, sprang to one side or the other as he fired, lest he become a target for a fatal shot from his enemy.

The noise of this last shot faded away slowly, she thought. To her staring eyes there still appeared a fanciful, thin red line, as though its course had been marked with a colored crayon on a blackboard. It was more permanent than the others. She could not tell which hand had directed it. She waited for the answer; and, no answer coming, the cold fear crept about within her.

When she raised her lids the fantasy of the thin knife-edge line of red in the dark was gone; the velvet black had closed over that gash, and now it mocked her eyes as the pulsing, rhythmic absence of any sound mocked her ears. If death was present in that smudge of nothingness it gave no sign.

There had been no outcry, no groan, no falling body, no last expulsion of breath, no tremor. If one man had been hit in the fusillade of the gun battle the other was not ready to believe it without more proof than that of silence; if both men were still alive each was waiting as cautiously as before. . . . But if both were dead the room would be still—a hush would come; and it would be such a smothering hush as now filled her aching ears with its fluffy powder.

She felt that she had been turned into bronze—cold and lifeless—the metallic representative of a young woman on her knees, with finger tips pulling at her lower lip. At this moment she might have failed if she had tried to utter a single word. She did not try. With the silence pounding away again in her ears and the velvet black swaying before her, she only tried to think.

Seven shots? There had been seven shots!

No—more! There had been ten! She had not counted them consciously. Her senses had counted them for her, without any intelligence; some undirected part of her mind had counted the shots, and it now flashed the total to her intelligence. Ten shots had been fired.

Ten shots! Then how many more were left in the revolvers of the two men? An end to the supply must come. She remembered vaguely the expression—sixshooters. If these were sixshooters and ten shots had been fired in this gun battle, then there were two shots more.

No—one! One more! The creature, the traces of whose rough hand still seemed to cling to her face, had shot one of his six at the empty spot beside her on the bed. Therefore, only one shot was left.

She could not tell how many shots each man had fired; but if only one shot was left it meant that one of the two had fired his last cartridge and was standing with an empty gun. The other man might not know this. . . . And yet, suppose it was the marauder who still had a bullet left?—he would know if he had counted that the other man was defenseless. If he had seen the flash of the other's gun six times he might have counted—if he had his wits about him. And if this was the case he now could seek his enemy and, drunk as he must be with a desire to kill, drive the shot home!

The velvet black and the silence still held their thick fabrics over the unanswered question. Neither man stirred. Dead or alive, each, wherever he might be—flat on the floor, barricaded behind furniture, upright against the wall, stiffening slowly or tingling with life—was motionless, giving forth no sign.

The truth came to her suddenly; it came as a whisper out of the dark. . . . If the burglar was still alive and had the last shot in his weapon, he must be made to waste it before he could realize his terrible advantage.

Without taking her eyes away from the field of the dark, she reached cautiously behind, making her fingers creep over the folds of bedclothing until they reached one of the pillows. She made them clutch it with a strength that would not fail; and, with a sweep of her arm, she hurled it out into the sea of velvet black. It fell, with its soft thud, in the middle of the room.

At it, with the viciousness of a carnivorous thing to which red meat has been thrown, there leaped the spit of flame; at it the voice of the gun yapped angrily; at it, from the level of the floor, a low human growl was hurled.

The black closed its wounds again. The silence rushed back into the room—this for a moment.

Then came the sounds of guttural noises in a man's throat, the sound of feet; a chair went over with a crash. The door slammed. One of the two men had gone out or closed the exit to prevent an escape. The key in the brass lock turned noisily. Something went scraping and bumping along the wainscoting of the wall.

A second of silence came. It was broken only by the sound of a labored human breath—painful, slow, rasping—a sound that might come from the dry lips of a dying man.

A hand was rattling the doorknob, again, with desperate twists, and pulling at the unyielding lock. Then came the slam of a door far away—the front door, leading to the street. This was followed by a scratching sound in the room, a noise suggestive of the convulsion of death, when finger nails go here and there seeking rough surfaces to announce the extremity of life.

Then came the flare.

To her, already relieved from the silence, this tiny flare of a match, which at last destroyed the world of velvet black—which threw its widening concentric rings, iridescent through the gunsmoke, out from the center of flame—was the most significant spot in the universe. . . .

In the center of this flare, framed by its extending circumference—white, drawn, but showing by its anxious peering that his only interest now was in her safety—was the illuminated face of her husband.

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MALVINY, who was coal-black and weighed upward of two hundred pounds, for long had coveted a white evening gown belonging to her employer, a clubwoman in a Southern town. In spite of the fact that the mistress was scarcely half the bulk of the maid, the maid nevertheless dreamed of the day when that wondrous frock would come into her possession. At what she regarded as the proper moment she approached the lady on the subject.

"Miss Nita," she said, "I suttinly does wish't you'd gimme dat white dress wid de gold spangles on hit, now dat you done wore hit out and quit wearin' hit."

"Why, Malvina," said the owner, "you couldn't get inside of that gown; you're too large."

"Jes' try me—dat's all I asts—jes' try me," said Malviny. "I kin git inside of hit. Yessum, I knows I'm fleshy—but I given."

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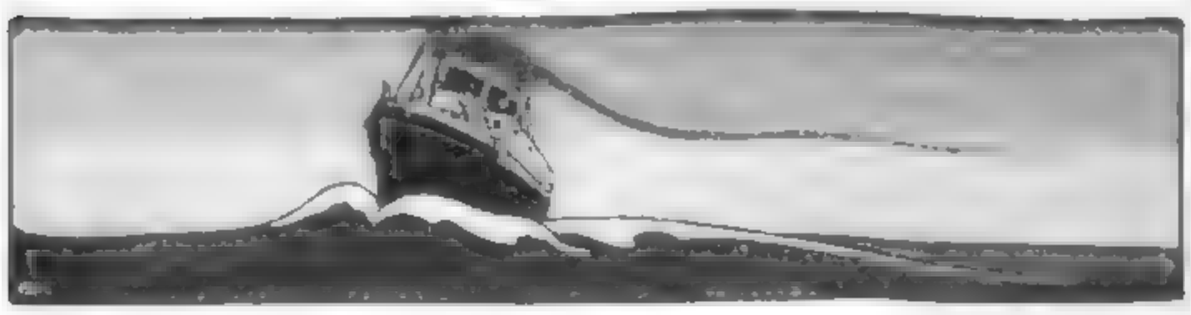

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The whole country now knows that the number of cars which are even candidates for comparison with the Cadillac has been narrowed down until they can be counted on the fingers of one hand.

The country no longer asks if the Cadillac is as fine a car as some other; but inquires, instead, what other cars compare with the Cadillac—and how.

If public opinion could be translated into a few simple words it would, we believe, result in the statement that there never has been a motor car equal to the Cadillac Eight—either in performance or in stability.

It is this kind of a car—this one example of V-type efficiency, demonstrated by a year's experience—which the new Cadillac succeeds.

It succeeds a car which many thousands of people believe to have been the best car which the world had yet produced.

The new Cadillac is the fruit of experience, acquired in the building of 13,000 V-type Eights, and of their service in the hands of 13,000 users.

We believe that in this new car the V-type engine is developed to a point of excellence which even the most conscientious effort to equal, cannot reach in many and many a day.

A year ago the Cadillac Company was blazing new paths of progress.

It pioneered new principles and new processes, pushing them to a point of certainty before its first V-type engine was marketed.

Nothing can take the place of that hard and painstaking period of invention, selection, rejection, adjustment and adaptation.

As a result, there is but one V-type standard based on extended experience; that is the Cadillac standard.

There is but one V-type criterion based on a demonstrated certainty; that is the Cadillac criterion.

It is obvious, therefore, that the first Cadillac Eight is the source from which V-type development must borrow its inspiration.

And in that fact lies an exceedingly important consideration.

In the pioneering process to which we have referred, the problems solved were peculiar to Cadillac construction.

They referred to that intimate relation between all the parts and all the processes of manufacture which make for a harmonious whole.

The Cadillac transmission and the Cadillac clutch—to cite only two of a number of features—were developed with direct reference to the requirements of the Cadillac V-type engine and the Cadillac car.

Their adoption by other makers may or may not be successful.

It is not the V-type engine, merely as a type, which has proven such a triumphant success, but the Cadillac Eight-Cylinder V-type engine, built into a Cadillac chassis according to Cadillac ideals—and as Cadillac artisans know how to build it.

That is what we meant when we said that nothing can take the place of Cadillac experience in building 13,000 cars.

That is why we do not believe that the equal of this new Cadillac Eight will exist for many a long day.

The first Cadillac Eight furnishes for those who would emulate its excellence, the one certain source of V-type information based on extended experience.

And the second Cadillac Eight, with that wonderful experience to build upon, naturally and logically marks an advance over the initial achievement.

There are no doubts or uncertainties about it.

Its advantages and virtues are all clear and positive and plain.

It has taken the one safe V-type criterion and carried it to the highest pitch.

It is twelve months away—13,000 cars away—from the least or last element of experiment.

Its pre-eminence cannot consistently be questioned.

In the face of the widespread adoption of the very principles which produced that pre-eminence, its leadership is not even a subject for discussion.

We believe that the new Eight-Cylinder Cadillac embodies the most practical combination of all 'round efficiency.

No really desirable qualities are sacrificed in order that some less essential—which provide more spectacular, but empty, "talking points"—may be exploited.

We believe that it possesses a maximum of the worth-while characteristics which the most exacting motorist wants in his car—power, speed, smoothness, flexibility, ease of operation, dependability and endurance.

We repeat—again—we do not believe the equal of this new Cadillac exists.

And we do not believe that it can or will exist for a long time to come.

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Cadillac Motor Car Co. Detroit, Mich.

SOMETHING NEW

(Continued from Page 21)

recommend it. Tell me, Baxter, how do you think the museum looks now? A little brighter? Better for the dash of color? I think so. Museums are generally such gloomy places."

"Lord Emsworth, may I explain once again?"

The earl looked annoyed.

"My dear Baxter, I have told you that there is nothing to explain. You are getting a little tedious. . . . What a deep, rich red this is, and how clean new paint smells! Do you know, Baxter, I have been longing to mess about with paint ever since I was a boy! I recollect my old father's beating me with a walking stick. . . . That would be before your time, of course. By the way, if you see Freddie, will you tell him I want to speak to him? He probably is in the smoking room."

It was an overwrought Baxter who delivered the message to the Honorable Freddie, who, as predicted, was in the smoking room, lounging in a deep armchair.

There are times when life presses hard on a man, and it pressed hard on Baxter now. Fate had played him a sorry trick. It had put him in a position where he had to choose between two courses, each as disagreeable as the other: He must either face a possible second fiasco like that of last night, or else he must abandon his post and cease to mount guard over his threatened treasure.

His imagination quailed at the thought of a repetition of last night's horrors. He had been badly shaken by his collision with the table and even more so by the events that had followed it. Those revolver shots still rang in his ears.

It was probably the memory of those shots that turned the scale. It was unlikely that he would again become entangled with a man bearing a tongue and the other things—he had given up in despair the attempt to unravel the mystery of the tongue; it completely baffled him—but it was by no means unlikely that if he spent another night in the gallery looking on the hall he might again become a target for Lord Emsworth's irresponsible firearm. Nothing, in fact, was more likely; for in the disturbed state of the public mind the slightest sound after nightfall would be sufficient cause for a fusillade.

He had actually overheard young Algernon Wooster telling Lord Stockheath he had a jolly good mind to sit on the stairs that night with a shotgun, because it was his opinion that there was a jolly sight more in this business than there seemed to be; and what he thought of the bally affair was that there was a gang of some kind at work, and that that feller—what's-his-name?—that feller Baxter was some sort of an accomplice.

With these things in his mind Baxter decided to remain that night in the security of his bedroom. He had lost his nerve. He formed this decision with the utmost reluctance, for the thought of leaving the road to the museum clear for marauders was bitter in the extreme. If he could have overheard a conversation between Joan Valentine and Ashe Marson it is probable he would have risked Lord Emsworth's revolver and the shotgun of the Honorable Algernon Wooster.

Ashe, when he met Joan and recounted the events of the night, at which Joan, who was a sound sleeper, had not been present, was inclined to blame himself as a failure. True, fate had been against him, but the fact remained that he had achieved nothing. Joan, however, was not of this opinion.

"You have done wonders," she said. "You have cleared the way for me. That is my idea of real teamwork. I'm so glad now that we formed our partnership. It would have been too bad if I had got all the advantage of your work and had jumped in and deprived you of the reward. As it is, I shall go down and finish the thing off to-night with a clear conscience."

"You can't mean that you dream of going down to the museum to-night!"

"Of course I do."

"But it's madness!"

"On the contrary, to-night is the one night when there ought to be no risk."

"After what happened last night?"

"Because of what happened last night. Do you imagine Mr. Baxter will dare to stir from his bed after that? If ever there was a chance of getting this thing finished it will be to-night."

"You're quite right. I never looked at it in that way. Baxter wouldn't risk a second disaster. I'll certainly make a success of it this time."

Joan raised her eyebrows.

"I don't quite understand you, Mr. Marson. Do you propose to try to get the scarab to-night?"

"Yes. It will be as easy as ——"

"Are you forgetting that, by the terms of our agreement, it is my turn?"

"You surely don't intend to hold me to that?"

"Certainly I do."

"But, good heavens! Consider my position! Do you seriously expect me to lie in bed while you do all the work, and then to take a half share in the reward?"

"I do."

"It's ridiculous!"

"It's no more ridiculous than that I should do the same. Mr. Marson, there's no use in our going over all this again. We settled it long ago."

And she refused to discuss the matter further, leaving Ashe in a condition of anxious misery comparable only to that which, as night began to draw near, gnawed the vitals of the Efficient Baxter.

Breakfast at Blandings Castle was an informal meal. There was food and drink in the long dining hall for such as were energetic enough to come down and get it; but the majority of the house party breakfasted in their rooms, Lord Emsworth, whom nothing in the world would have induced to begin the day in the company of a crowd of his relations, most of whom he disliked, setting them the example.

When, therefore, Baxter, yielding to Nature after having remained awake until the early morning, fell asleep at nine o'clock, nobody came to rouse him. He did not ring his bell, so he was not disturbed; and he slept on until half past eleven, by which time, it being Sunday morning and the house party including one bishop and several of the minor clergy, most of the occupants of the place had gone off to church.

Baxter shaved and dressed hastily, for he was in a state of nervous apprehension. He had wakened with a presentiment. Something told him the scarab had been stolen in the night, and he wished now that he had risked all and kept guard.

The house was very quiet as he made his way rapidly to the hall. As he passed a window he perceived Lord Emsworth, in an un-Sabbatarian suit of tweeds and bearing a garden fork—which must have pained the bishop—bending earnestly over a flower bed; but he was the only occupant of the grounds, and indoors there was a feeling of emptiness. The hall had that Sunday-morning air of wanting to be left to itself, and disapproving of the entry of anything human until lunch time, which can be felt only by a guest in a large house who remains at home when his fellows have gone to church.

The portraits on the walls, especially the one of the late Countess of Emsworth in the character of Venus rising from the sea, stared at Baxter as he entered, with cold reproof. The very chairs seemed distant and unfriendly; but Baxter was in no mood to appreciate their attitude. His conscience slept. His mind was occupied, to the exclusion of all other things, by the scarab and its fate. Long before he opened the museum door he was feeling the absolute certainty that the worst had happened.

It had. The card which announced that here was an Egyptian scarab of the reign of Cheops of the Fourth Dynasty, presented by J. Preston Peters, Esquire, still lay on the cabinet in its wonted place; but the scarab was gone.

For all that he had expected this, for all his premonition of disaster, it was an appreciable time before the Efficient Baxter rallied from the blow. He stood transfixed, goggling at the empty place.

Then his mind resumed its functions. All, he perceived, was not yet lost. Baxter the watchdog must retire, to be succeeded by Baxter the sleuthhound. He had been unable to prevent the theft of the scarab, but he might still detect the thief.

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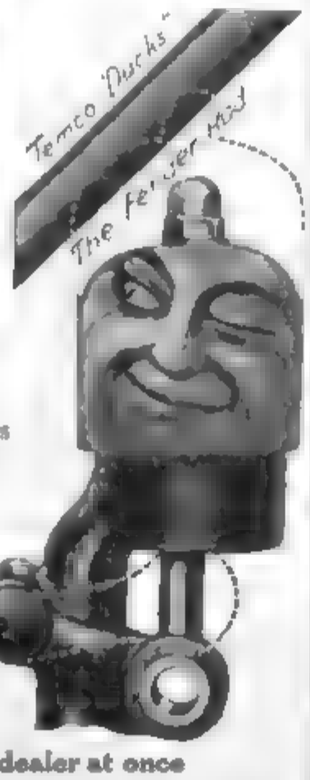

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clew from a wisp of straw or a flake of cigar ash; but Doctor Watson has to have it taken out for him and dusted, and exhibited clearly, with a label attached.

The average man is a Doctor Watson. We are wont to scoff in a patronizing manner at that humble follower of the great investigator; but as a matter of fact we should have been just as dull ourselves. We should not even have risen to the modest height of a Scotland Yard bungler.

Baxter was a Doctor Watson. What he wanted was a clew; but it is hard for the novice to tell what is a clew and what is not. And then he happened to look down—and there on the floor was a clew that nobody could have overlooked.

Baxter saw it, but did not immediately recognize it for what it was. What he saw, at first, was not a clew, but just a mess. He had a tidy soul and abhorred messes, and this was a particularly messy mess. A considerable portion of the floor was a sea of red paint. The can from which it had flowed was lying on its side near the wall. He had noticed that the smell of paint seemed particularly pungent, but had attributed this to a new freshet of energy on the part of Lord Emsworth. He had not perceived that paint had been spilled.

"Pah!" said Baxter.

Then suddenly, beneath the disguise of the mess, he saw the clew. A footmark! No less. A crimson footmark on the polished wood! It was as clear and distinct as though it had been left there for the purpose of assisting him. It was a feminine footmark, the print of a slim and pointed shoe.

This perplexed Baxter. He had looked on the siege of the scarab as an exclusively male affair. But he was not perplexed long. What could be simpler than that Mr. Peters should have enlisted female aid? The female of the species is more deadly than the male. Probably she makes a better purloiner of scarabs.

Inspiration came to him. Aline Peters had a maid! What more likely than that secretly she should be a hireling of Mr. Peters, on whom he had now come to look as a man of the blackest and most sinister character? Mr. Peters was a collector; and when a collector makes up his mind to secure a treasure he employs, Baxter knew, every possible means to that end.

Baxter was now in a state of great excitement. He was hot on the scent and his brain was working like a buzz saw in an ice box. According to his reasoning, if Aline Peters' maid had done this thing there should be red paint in the hall marking her retreat, and possibly a faint stain on the stairs leading to the servants' bedrooms.

He hastened from the museum and subjected the hall to a keen scrutiny. Yes; there was red paint on the carpet. He passed through the green-baize door and examined the stairs. On the bottom step there was a faint but conclusive stain of crimson! He was wondering how best to follow up this clew when he perceived Ashe coming down the stairs.

There are moments when the giddy excitement of being right on the trail causes the amateur—or Watsonian—detective to be incautious. If Baxter had been wise he would have achieved his object—the getting a glimpse of Joan's shoes—by a devious and snaky route. As it was, zeal getting the better of prudence, he rushed straight on. His early suspicion of Ashe had been temporarily obscured. Whatever Ashe's claims to be a suspect, it had not been his footprint Baxter had seen in the museum.

"Here, you!" said the Efficient Baxter excitedly.

"Sir?"

"The shoes!"

"I beg your pardon?"

"I wish to see the servants' shoes. Where are they?"

"I expect they have them on, sir. I have noticed that they wear them during the day."

"Yesterday's shoes, man—yesterday's shoes. Where are they?"

"Where are the shoes of yesteryear?" murmured Ashe. "I should say at a venture, sir, that they would be in a large basket somewhere near the kitchen. Our genial knife-and-shoe boy collects them, I believe, at early dawn."

"Would they have been cleaned yet?"

"If I know the lad, sir—no."

"Go and bring that basket to me. Bring it to me in this room."

The room to which he referred was none other than the private sanctum of Mr. Beach, the butler, the door of which, standing open, showed it to be empty. It was not Baxter's plan, excited as he was, to risk being discovered sifting shoes in the middle of a passage in the servants' quarters.

Ashe's brain was working rapidly as he made for the shoe cupboard, that little den of darkness and smells, where Billy, the knife-and-shoe boy, better known in the circle in which he moved as Young Bonehead, pursued his menial tasks. What exactly was at the back of the Efficient Baxter's mind prompting these maneuvers he did not know; but that there was something he was certain.

He had not yet seen Joan this morning, and he did not know whether or not she had carried out her resolve of attempting to steal the scarab on the previous night; but this activity and mystery on the part of their enemy must have some sinister significance. He gathered up the shoe basket thoughtfully.

He staggered back with it and dumped it down on the floor of Mr. Beach's room. The Efficient Baxter stooped eagerly over it. Ashe, leaning against the wall, straightened the creases in his clothes and flicked disgustedly at an inky spot which the journey had transferred from the basket to his coat.

"We have here, sir," he said, "a fair selection of our various foot coverings."

"You did not drop any on your way?"

"Not one, sir."

The Efficient Baxter uttered a grunt of satisfaction and bent once more to his task. Shoes flew about the room. Baxter knelt on the floor beside the basket and dug like a terrier at a rat hole. At last he made a dive and with an exclamation of triumph rose to his feet. In his hand he held a shoe.

"Put those back," he said.

Ashe began to pick up the scattered footgear.

"That's the lot, sir," he said, rising.

"Now come with me. Leave the basket there. You can carry it back when you return."

"Shall I put back that shoe, sir?"

"Certainly not. I shall take this one with me."

"Shall I carry it for you, sir?"

Baxter reflected.

"Yes. I think that would be best."

Trouble had shaken his nerve. He was not certain that there might not be others besides Lord Emsworth in the garden; and it occurred to him that, especially after his reputation for eccentric conduct had been so firmly established by his misfortunes that night in the hall, it might cause comment should he appear before them carrying a shoe.

Ashe took the shoe and, doing so, understood what before had puzzled him. Across the toe was a broad splash of red paint. Though he had nothing else to go on, he saw all. The shoe he held was a female shoe. His own researches in the museum had made him aware of the presence there of red paint. It was not difficult to build up on these data a pretty accurate estimate of the position of affairs.

"Come with me," said Baxter.

He left the room. Ashe followed him.

In the garden Lord Emsworth, garden fork in hand, was dealing summarily with a green young weed that had incautiously shown its head in the middle of a flower bed. He listened to Baxter's statement with more interest than he usually showed in anybody's statements. He resented the loss of the scarab, not so much on account of its intrinsic worth as because it had been the gift of his friend Mr. Peters.

"Indeed!" he said, when Baxter had finished. "Really? Dear me! It certainly seems—— It is extremely suggestive. You are certain there was red paint on this shoe?"

"I have it with me. I brought it on purpose to show you." He looked at Ashe, who stood in close attendance. "The shoe!"

Lord Emsworth polished his glasses and bent over the exhibit.

"Ah!" he said. "Now let me look at—— This, you say, is the—— Just so; just so! Just—— My dear Baxter, it may be that I have not examined this shoe with sufficient care, but—— Can you point out to me exactly where this paint is?"

The Efficient Baxter stood staring at the shoe with a wild, fixed stare. Of any suspicion of paint, red or otherwise, it was absolutely and entirely innocent!

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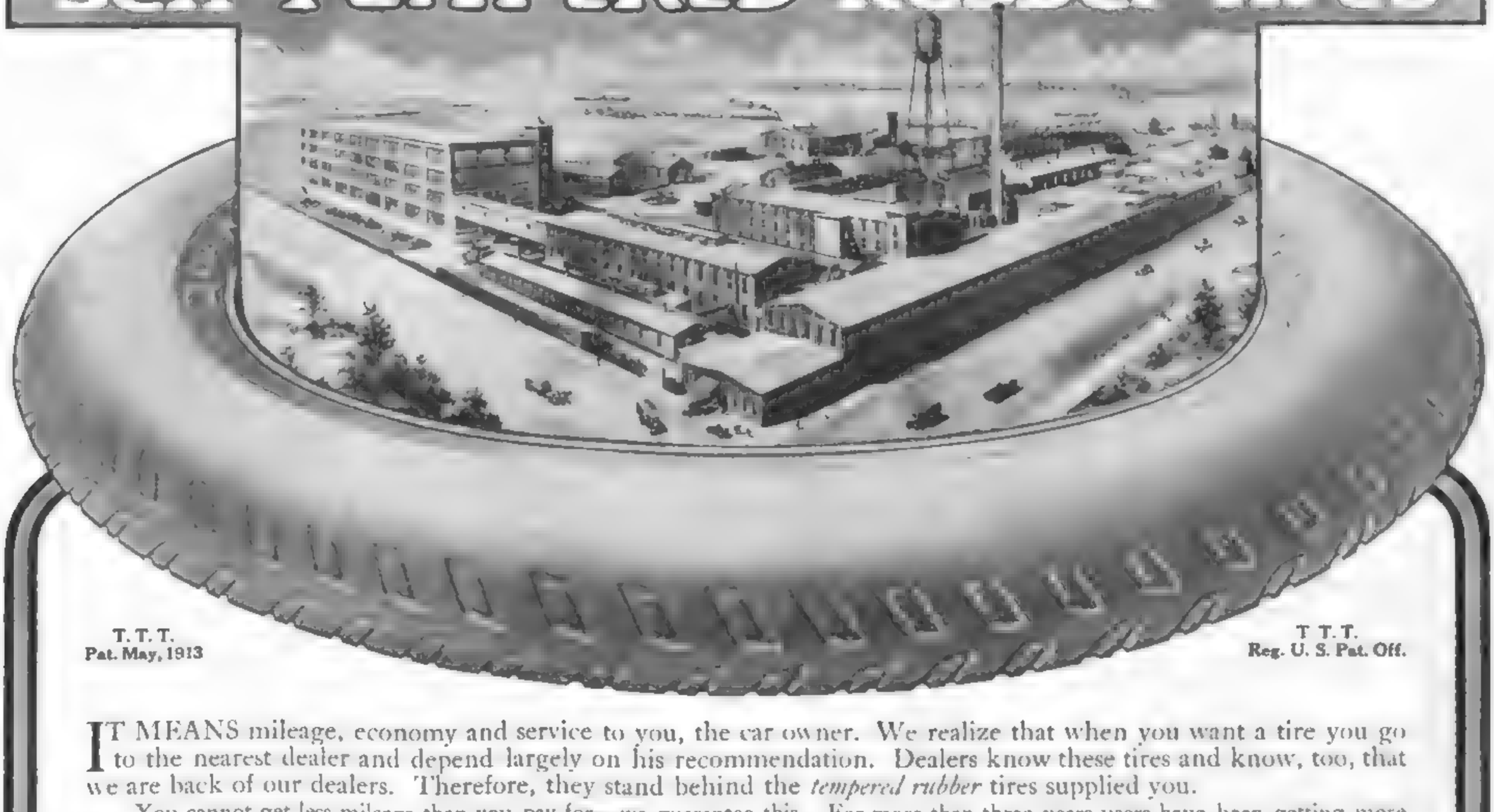

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else to go to, and were coming in from the fields, where they had sought safety, to sleep in the cellar for the night. He was leaving a small aperture, to be closed with bags of sand, so that if the house was destroyed over them in the night they could crawl out and escape.

He knelt on the bricks in front of the house, a patient, resigned figure, playing no politics, interested not at all in war and diplomacy, in a way to the sea or to a place in the sun—one of the millions who must adapt themselves to new and fearsome situations and do their best.

That night, sitting at dinner in a hotel, I saw two pretty nurses come in. They had been relieved for a few hours from their hospital and were on holiday.

One of them had a clear, although musical voice. What she said came to me with great distinctness, and what she was wishing for was a glass of American soda water!

Now, long months before I had had any idea of going to the war I had read an American correspondent's story of the evacuation of Antwerp, and of a tall young American girl, a nurse, whom the others called Morning Glory. He never knew the rest of her name. Anyhow, Morning Glory leaped into my mind and stayed there, through soup, through rabbit, which was called on the menu something entirely different, through hard cakes and a withered orange.

So when a young lieutenant asked permission to bring them over to meet me, I was eager. It was Morning Glory! Her name is really Glory, and she is a Southern girl. Somewhere among my papers I have a snapshot of her helping to take a wounded soldier out of an ambulance, and if the correspondent wants it I shall send it to him. Also her name, which he never knew. And I will verify his opinion that it is better to be a Morning Glory in Flanders than to be a good many other things that I can think of.

I have dealt so far with the large base hospitals, hospitals regularly if somewhat hastily equipped, with a staff of surgeons, with nurses and orderlies, with supplies coming in at regular intervals. There is a darker side to the picture.

With the possible exception of Germany, which seems to have anticipated everything, no one of the nations engaged appears to have expected the fearful carnage of this war. The destructive effect of the modern, high-explosive shell had been well known, but it is the trench form of warfare which, by keeping troops in stationary positions, under grilling artillery fire, has given such shells their opportunity. Shrapnel has not been so deadly to the men in the trenches.

Poverty-Stricken French Hospitals

The result of the vast casualty lists is some hundreds of isolated hospitals scattered through France, not affiliated with any of the Red Cross societies, unorganized, poverty-stricken, frequently having only the services of a surgeon who can come but once a week. They have no dressings, no nurses save peasants, no bedding, no coal to cook even the scanty food that the villagers can spare.

No coal, for France is facing a coal famine to-day. Her coal mines are in the territory held by the Germans. Even if she had the mines, where would she get men to labor in them, or trains to transport the coal?

There are more than three hundred such hospitals scattered through isolated French villages to-day, hospitals where everything is needed. For whatever else has held fast in this war, the nursing system of France has absolutely failed in this crisis. Some six hundred miles of hospital wards there are to-day in France, with cots so close together that one can hardly step between, and little system!

The story of the town of Dol, in Brittany, is very typical of what the war has brought into many isolated communities.

Dol is a little town of two thousand inhabitants, with a thirteenth-century church, with medieval houses with quaint stone porticoes and outside staircases. There is one street, shaped like a sickle, with a handle that is the station road.

War was declared and the men of Dol went away. The women and children brought in the harvest, and waited for news. What little came was discouraging.

One day in August one of the rare trains stopped at the station, and an inspector got off and walked up the sickle-handle to the schoolhouse. He looked about and made the comment that it would hold eighty beds. Whereupon he went away, and Dol waited for news and gathered the harvest.

On the fifth of September the terrific battle of the Marne commenced. The French strategic retreat was at an end, and with her allies France resumed the offensive. What happened in the little village of Dol?

And remember that Dol is only one of hundreds of tiny interior towns. Dol has never heard of the Red Cross, but Dol worshiped, in its thirteenth-century church, the cross of Christ.

This is what happened:

One day in the first week of September a train drew up at the box-like station, a heterogeneous train—coaches, luggage vans, cattle and horse cars. The doors opened, and the work of emptying the cars began. The women and children, aghast and bewildered, ran down the sickle-handle road and watched. Four hundred wounded men were taken out of the cars, laid prone on the station platform, and the train went on.

There were no surgeons in Dol, but there was a chemist who knew something of medicine and who, for one reason or another, had not been called to the ranks. There were no horses to draw carts. There was nothing.

The chemist was a man of action. Very soon the sickle and the old church saw a curious sight. They saw women and children, a procession, pushing wounded men to the school in the hand carts that country people use for milk cans and produce. They saw brawny peasant women carrying chairs in which sat injured men with lolling heads and sunken eyes.

Nursing Without Necessaries

Bales of straw were brought into the school. Tender if unaccustomed hands washed fearful wounds, but there were no dressings, no bandages. There are to-day, in the town of Dol, no dressings, no bandages.

Anyone who knows the French peasant and his poverty will realize the plight of the little town. The peasant has no reserves of supplies. Life is reduced to its simplest elements. There is nothing that is not in use.

Dol solved part of its problem by giving up its own wooden beds to the soldiers. It tore up its small stock of linen, its towels, its dusters; but the problem of food remained.

There was a tiny stove, on which the three or four teachers of the school had been accustomed to cook their midday meal. There was no coal, only wood, and green wood at that. All day, and all day now, Dol cooks the *pot-a-feu* for the wounded on that tiny stove. *Pot-a-feu* is good diet for convalescents, but the light diets must have eggs, broth, whatever can be found.

So the peasant woman of Dol comes to the hospital, bringing a few eggs, the midday meal of her family, who will do without.

I have spoken mainly in the past tense, but conditions in Dol are unchanged to-day. An old marquise, impoverished by the war, darns the pathetic socks of the wounded men and mends their uniforms. The corridors and schoolrooms are filled—every inch of space—with a motley collection of beds, on which men lie in their uniforms, for lack of other clothing. They are covered with old patchwork quilts, with anything that can be used. There are, of course, no sheets. All the sheets were used long ago for dressings. A friend of mine there recently saw a soldier with one leg, in the kitchen, rolling wretched scraps and dusters for bandages. There was no way to sterilize them, of course. Once a week a surgeon comes. When he goes away he takes his instruments with him.

This is not an isolated case, nor an exaggerated one. There are things I do not care to publish. Three hundred and more such hospitals are known. The French Government pays, or will pay, twenty-five cents a day to keep these men. Black bread and *pot-a-feu* is all that can be managed on that amount.

Convalescents sit up in bed and painfully unravel their tattered socks for wool. They tie the bits together, often two or three inches in length, and knit new feet in old socks, or—when they secure enough—new socks. For the Germans hold the woolcities of France. Ordinary worsted costs eighteen and nineteen francs in Dinard and Saint Malo, or from three dollars and sixty cents to three dollars and eighty cents a pound. Much of the government reserves of woolen underwear for the soldiers was in the captured towns, and German prisoners have been found wearing woolens with the French Government stamp.

Every sort of building is being used for these isolated hospitals garages, town halls, private dwellings, schools. At first they had no chloroform, no instruments. There are cases on record where automobile tools were used in emergency, kitchen knives, saws, anything. In one case, recently, two hundred convalescents, leaving one of these hospitals on a cold day in February, were called back, on the arrival of a hundred freshly wounded men, that every superfluous bandage on their wounds might be removed, to be used again.

Naturally, depending entirely on the unskilled nursing of the village women, much that we regard as fundamental in hospital practice is ignored. Wounded men, typhoid and scarlet fever cases are found in the same wards. In one isolated town, Redon, a single clinical thermometer is obliged to serve for sixty typhoid and scarlet fever patients.

Sometimes the men in these isolated and ill-equipped refuges realize the horror and hopelessness of their situation. The nights are particularly bad. Anyone who knows hospitals well, knows the night terrors of the wards; knows, too, the contagion of excitement that proceeds from a hysterical or delirious patient.

In some of these lonely hospitals hell breaks loose at night. The peasant women must sleep. Even the tireless nuns cannot labor forever without rest. The men have come from battlefields of infinite horror. A frenzied dream, a delirious soldier calling them to the charge, and panic rages.

To offset these horrors of the night the peasants have, here and there, resorted to music. It is naïve, pathetic. Where there is a piano it is moved into the school, or garage, or whatever the building may be, and at twilight a nun or a volunteer musician plays quietly, to soothe the men to sleep. In one or two towns a village band, or perhaps a lone cornetist, plays in the street outside.

How Americans Can Help

So the days go on, and the nights. Supplies are begged for and never come. Dressings are washed in the stream, to be used again and again.

An attempt is now being made to better these conditions. A Frenchwoman helping in one of these hospitals, and driven almost to madness by the outcries of men and boys undergoing operations without anæsthetics, found her appeals for help unanswered. She decided to go to England to ask her friends there for chloroform, and to take it back on the next boat. She was successful. She carried back with her, on numerous journeys, dressings, chloroform, cotton, even a few instruments. She is still doing this work. Others interested in isolated hospitals, hearing of her success, appealed to her; and now regular, if small, shipments of chloroform and dressings are going across the Channel.

Americans willing to take their own cars, and willing to work, will find plenty to do in distributing such supplies over there. A request has come to me to find such Americans. Surgeons who can spare a scalpel, an artery clip or two, ligatures—catgut or silk—and line forceps, may be certain of having them used at once. Bandages rolled by kindly American hands will not lie unclaimed on the quay at Havre or Calais.

So many things about these little hospitals of France are touching, without having any particular connection. There was a surgeon in one of these isolated villages, with an X-ray machine but no gloves or lead screen to protect himself. He worked on, using the deadly rays to locate pieces of shell, bullets and shrapnel, and knowing all the time what would happen. He has lost both hands.

Since my return to America the problems of those who care for the sick and wounded have been further complicated, among the Allies, by the inhuman use of asphyxiating gases.

Sir John French says of these gases:

"The effect of this poison is not merely disabling, or even painlessly fatal, as suggested in the German press. Those of its victims who do not succumb on the field and who can be brought into hospitals suffer acutely and, in a large proportion of cases, die a painful and lingering death. Those who survive are in little better case, as the injury to their lungs appears to be of a

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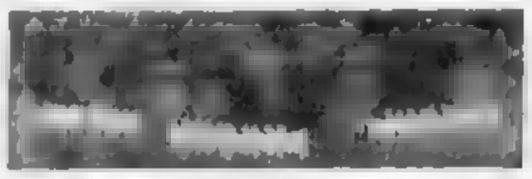

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permanent character and reduces them to a condition that points to their being invalids for life."

I have just received from the front one of the respirators given out to the troops to be used when the gas clouds appear.

"It is prepared with hypophosphite of soda," writes the surgeon who sends it, "and all they have to do before putting it on is to dip it in the water in the trenches. They are all supplied in addition with goggles, which are worn on their caps."

This is from the same letter:

"That night a German soldier was brought in wounded, and jolly glad he was to be taken. He told us he had been turned down three times for phthisis—tuberculosis—and then in the end was called up and put into the trenches after eight weeks' training. All of which is very significant. Another wounded German told the men at the ambulance that they must move on as soon as they could, as on May 12th the Germans will be in Calais.

"All the German soldiers write home now on the official cards, which have Calais printed on the top of them!"

It is undeniably true that the humanities are failing us as the war goes on. Not, thank God, the broad humanity of the Red Cross, but that individual compassion of a man for his wounded brother, of which the very fabric of mercy is woven. There is too much death, too much suffering. Men grow calloused. As yet the loss is not irretrievable, but the war is still only a matter of months. What if it is to be of years?

Much has been said of the physical effect of war on a people, on the result of the propagation of a race by the unfit, on the curious fact that, even among the normal people who remain at home, the birth rate is lessened. But what of the moral and spiritual and æsthetic effect of such a war? What of thinking for a long time in terms of blood? What of substituting conquest for happiness, or the God of Battles for the Man of Peace?

Priests in the Army of Mercy

France and Belgium were suffering from a wave of atheism before the war. There comes a time in the existence of nations, as in the lives of individuals, when human endeavor seems useless, when the world and the things thereof have failed. At such times nations and individuals alike turn at last to a Higher Power. France is on her knees to-day. Her churches are crowded. Not perhaps since the days of chivalry, when men were shriven in the churches before going out to battle, has France so generally knelt and bowed her head—but it is to the God of Battles that she prays.

On her battlefields the priests have most signally distinguished themselves. Some have exchanged the soutane for the uniform, and have fought bravely and well. Others, like the priests who stood firm in the midst of Jordan, have carried their message of hope to the dying into the trenches.

No article on the work of the Red Cross can be complete without a reference to the work of these priests, not perhaps affiliated with the society, but doing yeoman work of service among the wounded. They are everywhere, in the trenches or at the outposts, in the hospitals and hospital trains, in hundreds of small villages, where the entire community plus its burden of wounded turns to the *curé* for everything, from advice to the sacrament.

In prostrate Belgium the demands on the priests have been extremely heavy. Subjected to insult, injury and even death during the German invasion, where in one diocese alone thirteen were put to death—their churches destroyed, or used as barracks by the enemy—that which was their world has turned to chaos about them. Those who remained with their conquered people have done their best to keep their small communities together and to look after their material needs—which has, indeed, been the lot of the priests of battle-scarred Flanders for many generations.

Others have attached themselves to the hospital service. All the Belgian trains of wounded are cared for solely by these priests, who perform every necessary service for their men, and who, as I have said before, administer the sacrament and make coffee to cheer the flagging spirits of the wounded, with equal courage and resource.

Surgeons, nurses, priests, nuns, volunteer workers who substitute for lack of training both courage and zeal, these are a part of the machinery of mercy. There is another element—the boy scouts.

During the early days of the war the boy scouts of England, then on school holiday, did marvelous work. Boys of fourteen made repeated trips across the Channel, bringing back from France children, invalids, timorous women. They volunteered in the hospitals, ran errands, carried messages, were as useful as only a willing boy can be. They did scout service, too, guarding the railway lines and assisting in watching the Channel coast; but with the end of the holiday most of the English boy scouts were obliged to go back to school. Their activities were not over, but they were largely curtailed.

There were five thousand boy scouts in Belgium at the beginning of the war. I saw them everywhere—behind the battle lines, on the driving seats of ambulances, at the doors of hospitals. They were calm as only boys can be. Because I know a good deal about small boys I smothered a riotous impulse to hug them, and spoke to them as grown-up to grown-up. Thus approached, they met my advances with dignity, but without excitement.

And after a time I learned something about them from the chief scout of Belgium; perhaps it will show the boy scouts of America what they will mean to the country in time of war. Perhaps it will make them realize that being a scout is not, after all, only camping in the woods, long hikes, games in the open. The long hikes fit a boy for dispatch carrying, the camping teaches him to care for himself when, if necessity arises, he is thrown on the country, like his older brother, the fighting man.

A small cog, perhaps, in the machinery of mercy, but a necessary one. A vital cog in the vast machinery of war—that is the boy scout to-day.

The day after the declaration of war the Belgian scouts were mobilized, by order of the minister of war—five thousand boys, then, ranging in age from twelve to eighteen, an army of children. What a sight they must have been! How many grown-ups can think of it with dry eyes? What a terrible emergency was this, which must call the children into battle!

They were placed at the service of the military authorities, to do any and every kind of work. Some, with ordinary bicycles or motorcycles, were made dispatch riders. The senior scouts were enlisted in the regular army, armed, and they joined the soldiers in barracks. The younger boys, between thirteen and sixteen, were letter-carriers, messengers in the different ministries, or orderlies in the hospitals that were immediately organized. Those who could drive automobiles were given that to do.

Others of the older boys, having been well trained in scouting, were set to watch points of importance, or given carbines and attached to the civic guard. During the siege of Liège between forty and fifty boy scouts were constantly employed carrying food and ammunition to the beleaguered troops.

When Children Go to War

The Germans finally realized that every boy scout was a potential spy, working for his country. The uniform itself then became a menace, since boys wearing it were frequently shot. The boys abandoned it, the older ones assuming the Belgian uniform and the younger ones returning to civilian dress. But although, in the chaos that followed the invasion and particularly the fall of Liège, they were virtually disbanded, they continued their work as spies, as dispatch riders, as stretcher-bearers.

There are still nine boy scouts with the famous Ninth Regiment, which has been decorated by the king.

One boy scout captured, single-handed, two German officers. Somewhere or other he had got a revolver, and with it was patrolling a road. The officers were lost and searching for their regiments. As they stepped out of a wood the boy confronted them, with his revolver leveled. This happened near Liège.

Trust a boy to use his wits in emergency! Here is another lad, aged fifteen, who found himself in Liège after its surrender, and who wanted to get back to the Belgian Army. He offered his services as stretcher-bearer in the German Army, and was given a German Red Cross pass. Armed with this pass he left Liège, passed successfully many sentries, and at last got to Antwerp by a circuitous route. On the way he found a dead German and, being only a small boy after all, he took off the dead man's stained uniform and bore it in his arms into Antwerp!

There is no use explaining about that uniform. If you do not know boys you will never understand. If you do, it requires no explanation.

Here is a fourteen-year-old lad, intrusted with a message of the utmost importance for military headquarters in Antwerp. He left Brussels in civilian clothing, but he had neglected to take off his boy scout shirt—boy-fashion! The Germans captured him and stripped him, and they burned the boy scout shirt. Then they locked him up, but they did not find his message.

All day he lay in duress, and part of the night. Perhaps he shed a few tears. He was very young, and things looked black for him. Boy scouts were being shot, remember! But it never occurred to him to destroy the message that meant his death if discovered.

He was clever with locks and such things, after the manner of boys, and for most of the night he worked with the window and shutter lock. Perhaps he had a nail in his pocket, or some wire. Most boys do. And just before dawn he got window and shutter opened, and dropped, a long drop, to the ground. He lay there for a while, getting his breath and listening. Then, on his stomach, he slid away into that darkest hour that is just before the dawn.

Later on that day a footsore and weary—but triumphant—youngster presented himself at the headquarters of the Belgian Army in Antwerp and insisted on seeing the minister of war. Being at last admitted, he turned up a very travel-stained and weary little boy's foot and proceeded to strip a piece of adhesive plaster from the sole.

Underneath the plaster was the message!

War is a thing of fearful and curious anomalies. It has shown that humane units may comprise a brutal whole; that civilization is a shirt over a coat of mail. It has shown that hatred and love are kindred emotions, boon companions, friends. It has shown that in every man there are two men, devil and saint; that there are two courages, that of the mind, which is bravest, that of the heart, which is greatest.

The Creed of King and Country

It has shown that government by men only is not an appeal to reason, but an appeal to arms; that on women, without a voice to protest, must fall the burden. It is easier to die than to send a son to death.

It has shown that a single hatred may infect a world, but it has shown that mercy too may spread among nations. That love is greater than cannon, greater than hate, greater than vengeance; that it triumphs over wrath, as good triumphs over evil.

Direct descendant of the cross of the Christian faith, the Red Cross carries onto every battlefield the words of the Man of Mercy:

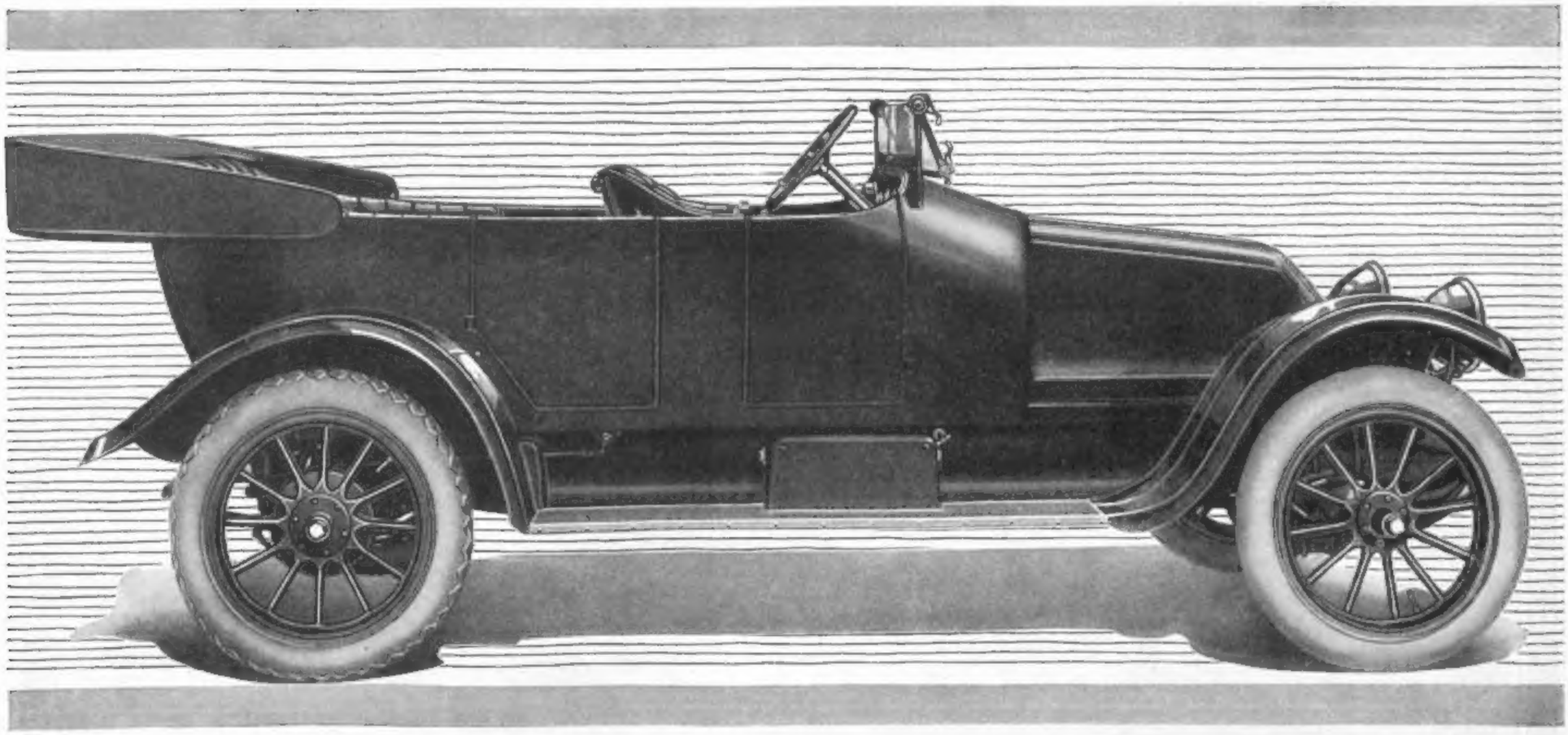
"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

On a day in March I went back to England. March in England is spring. Masses of snowdrops lined the paths in Hyde Park. The grass was green, the roads hard and dry under the eager feet of Kitchener's great army. They marched gayly by. The drums beat. The passers-by stopped. Here and there an open carriage or an automobile drew up, and pale men, some of them still in bandages, sat and watched. In their eyes was the same flaming eagerness, the same impatience to get back, to be loosed against the old lion's foes.

All through England, all through France, all through that tragic corner of Belgium that remains to her, are similar armies drilling and waiting, equally young, equally eager, equally resolute. And the thing that they were going to I knew. I had seen it in that mysterious region that had swallowed up those who had gone before; in the trenches, in the operating rooms of field hospitals, at outposts where the sentries walked hand in hand with death.

War is not two great armies meeting in the clash and frenzy of battle. War is a boy carried on a stretcher, looking up at God's blue sky with bewildered eyes that are soon to close; war is a woman carrying a child that has been injured by a shell; war is spirited horses tied in burning buildings and waiting for death; war is the flower of a race, battered, hungry, bleeding, up to its knees in filthy water; war is an old woman burning a candle before the Mater Dolorosa for the son she has given.

For King and Country!



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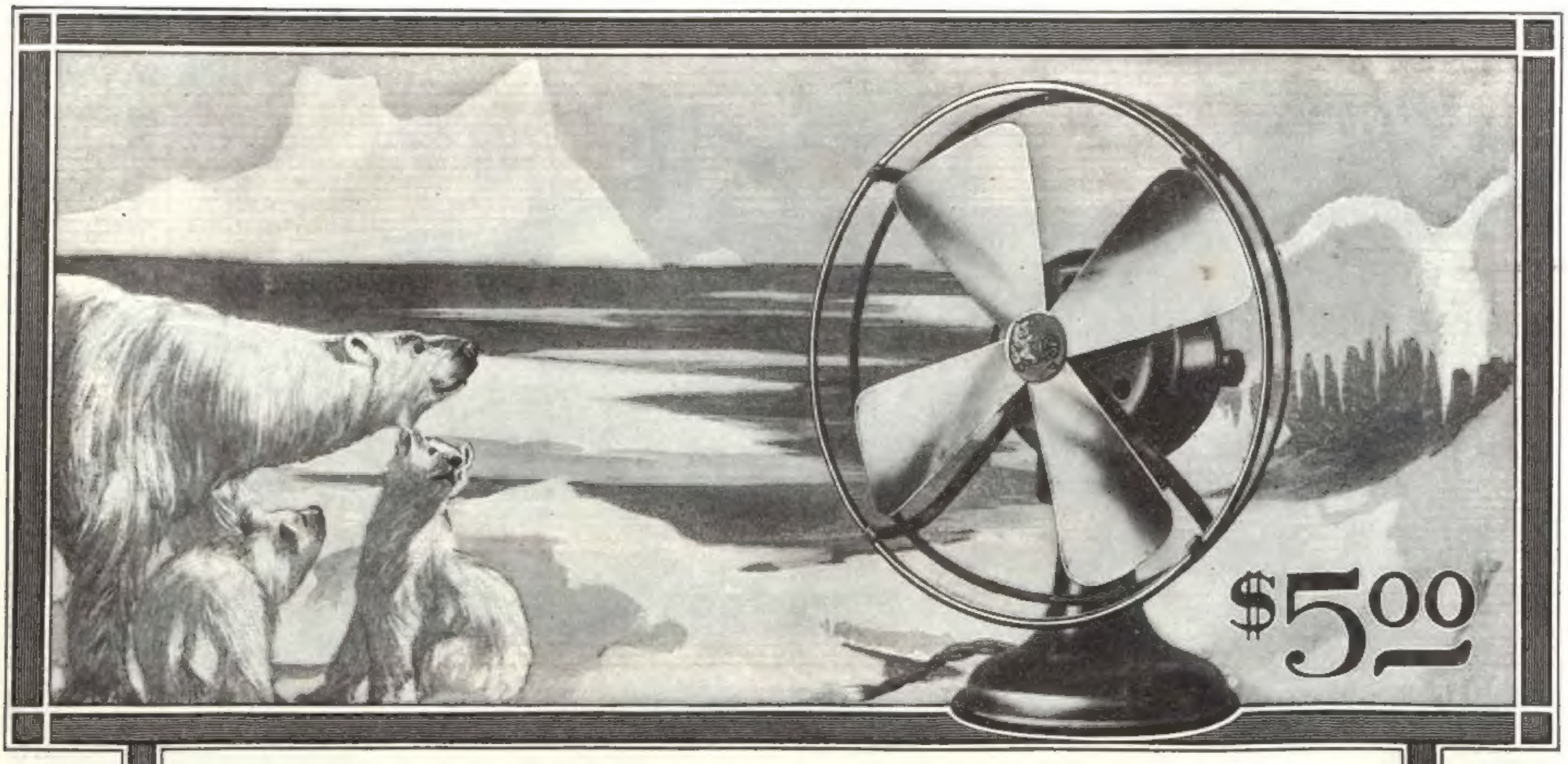

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Buy the Polar Cub Electric Fan of your dealer. But if you cannot readily find it, write us; we will tell you where you can buy it, or will see that you are supplied.

Write (giving your dealer's name) for illustrated folder describing this efficient, low-priced fan.

THE MYSTO MANUFACTURING CO., 400 Fox St., New Haven, Conn.

DEALERS: The low price and guaranteed efficiency of the Polar Cub Electric Fan open up a tremendous field for sales. The results from our advertising in *The Post*, *Collier's*, *System*, etc., prove that it is the fan thousands of people have been waiting for. If you have not stocked it, write us at once.

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CLICQUOT CLUB BEVERAGES:

Ginger Ale
Root Beer
Lemon Sour
Orange Phosphate
Birch Beer
Sarsaparilla

Made in America

Clicquot Club

Best in the World

Pronounced Klee-ko

GINGER ALE

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WHEN Clicquot Club Ginger Ale comes in, thirst goes out. Dry throats are made happy, and hot people cool off and smile.

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The mild stimulus of the ginger makes it perfectly safe to drink, no matter how heated you are.

The water is from a deep, underground, rock-bed spring, is mildly laxative and highly carbonated.

Mixes well with almost anything.

> Try "Clicquot Julep"—a sprig of mint, a slice of orange, juice of half a lemon or lime—fill glass with Clicquot Club Ginger Ale.

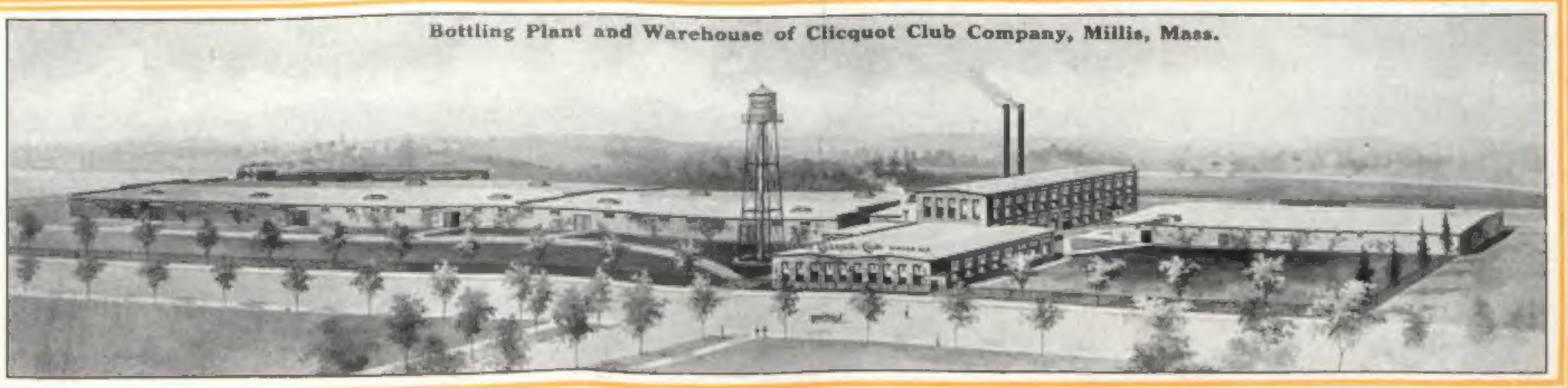
Two large glassfuls in each bottle.

Good Grocers and Druggists recognize its popularity with the best class of trade. Buy it by the case.

THE CLICQUOT CLUB CO., MILLIS, MASS.

New York Office, 100 Hudson Street
Chicago Office, 356 North Michigan Avenue

Bottling Plant and Warehouse of Clicquot Club Company, Millis, Mass.



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